W. MULLAN & SON,
BOOKSELLERS,
BELFAST.

OOR AIN FOLK

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS ON 'OOR AIN FOLK.'

"His powers of description are utilised in many good scenes of rustic life . . . many happy sketches of the natural beauties of the Braes of Angus—many anecdotes . . . both fresh and forcible."—*Athenæum.*

"Really interesting and amusing; there are few of his own nationality who will not be deeply interested in parts of these 'memories of manse life.' The central figure is that of no common man, and it must possess an interest even for those who can claim no kindred with his country, and whose lines have been cast in far different places."—*Saturday Review.*

"With such stories the volume sparkles. The student and historian of Scotland and Scottish manners in the first half of the nineteenth century will find it both entertaining as a sketch book, and invaluable as a record."—*Montrose Standard.*

"No more genial and entertaining book has been issued from the press since Dean Ramsay printed his *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* . . . tells his stories with such gusto and felicity of language . . . written with great vigour and freshness . . . will be read with genuine pleasure and interest by all who can enjoy the native humour of the Scottish peasantry."—*People's Friend.*

"'This chatty and charming book.' . . . His fascinating pages. . . . As for the anecdotes of Scottish life and character, forming a fine supplement to the collection of Dean Ramsay, which are packed into Mr. Inglis's pages, we are really at a loss how to sample them, they are all so good. Some of the drinking stories . . . are inimitable."—*The Daily Chronicle.*

"Contains a vivid picture of humble manse life, and the struggles of the Disruption, and above all is full of 'pawky' stories. He has been before the public already as 'Maori,' and should attract fresh readers by his new book."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

"Scots folk all the world over will feel that they owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Inglis for the charming volume of reminiscences which he has just produced. It is sure not only of a welcome but of a perpetual resting-place on the shelves of even the most crowded library.

"Contains a store of admirable Scottish stories, many of them quite new to us, that can only be compared in quality to the classic collection of Dean Ramsay. . . . A great treat to all true Scotchmen."—*Glasgow Herald.*

"A perfect treasure-house of good things."—*Arbroath Herald.*

"Much that is of public interest . . . many pleasant glimpses of a rural Scotland which has vanished as completely as the Flood. . . . Many of his stories are fresh, pointed, and racy of the Soil," etc.—*Daily Free Press* (Aberdeen).

"Of value as a historical record of Scottish rural life during the past hundred years. No musty chronicle of dry-as-dust facts. Every page is brightened either by a vivid description of scenery, a comical anecdote, or a witty retort, and the reader must be a morose mortal indeed who does not enjoy the brisk humour of the narrator."—*Dundee Advertiser.*

"Wonderfully graphic and realistic. . . . We are introduced to many fine types of Scotch character, many quaint customs and habits, and a diversified mass of amusing and out-of-the-way information," etc.—*North British Daily Mail.*

OOR AIN FOLK

BEING MEMORIES OF MANSE LIFE IN THE MEARNS AND A CRACK ABOOT AULD TIMES

BY

JAMES INGLIS

'MAORI,'

AUTHOR OF 'TIRHOOT RHYMES,' 'SPORT AND WORK ON THE NEPAUL FRONTIER,' 'OUR AUSTRALIAN COUSINS,' 'OUR NEW ZEALAND COUSINS,' 'TENT LIFE IN TIGER LAND,' ETC. ETC.

SECOND EDITION

EDINBURGH

DAVID DOUGLAS, 10 CASTLE STREET

1894

All rights reserved

Printed by R. & R. Clark

FOR

DAVID DOUGLAS, EDINBURGH

LONDON . . SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT AND CO., LIM.
CAMBRIDGE . . MACMILLAN AND BOWES
GLASGOW . . JAMES MACLEHOSE AND SONS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my eldest surviving brother,

Lieut.-Colonel R. W. Inglis,

at whose suggestion I first conceived the idea of writing such a record, and who has been ever a loyal, loving, and true-hearted brother to me.

J. I.

'Let brotherly love continue.'

There's kintra fowk, an' Hielant fowk ;
La'land fowk, an' kent fowk ;
Fowk aboot, fowk i' the yaird ;
But there's nae fowk like
OOR AIN FOWK !

Auld Sang.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

I LITTLE thought when I began my filial task, that I would ever be privileged to again visit the old glen and village, and see the old manse on 'the Braes o' Angus.' Still less did I anticipate such a compliment from the public as the demand for a new edition almost within a month of the publication of the book; yet, such a good fortune has befallen me, and I am very grateful. I am indeed conscious that my critics have been 'more than kind.' It was only to be expected that my boyish recollections of more than thirty years ago would be in some respects inaccurate, but I am pleased to find that my mistakes as to facts have been so few, and in the present edition I think the main portion of these has been corrected. As to errors of style, I doubt I am too old now to make much improvement; and as to matters of opinion expressed in the book, I have seen no reason, so far at any rate, for me to give up my own.

I have received letters from all parts of the country —from university professors, bankers, ministers, elders, 'Kintra fouk,' 'Hielant fouk' 'Laland fouk,' and 'Kent fouk'—and all have alike been complimentary and appreciative. Indeed I have much reason to be especially grateful and proud that the memory of my dear father and mother is still so honourably and affectionately treasured by a far wider circle of 'oor ain fouk,'

using the phrase in its larger significance, than ever I imagined possible.

I have also received many very curious and humorous contributions to the rural records of the time of which my book mainly treats. For these I am grateful, and will be glad to get more of the same sort. I will find a good use for them in my next book, which I am now more than ever encouraged to produce. One correspondent, for instance, has reminded me of a good story of 'Painter Tam' mentioned at page 159, which I cannot withhold. Tam, it seems, was one day accosted by a hulking fellow, very pitted from smallpox, and who fancied himself a great wit. 'The lads' had been tormenting Tam, and making fun of his pretensions as a portrait-painter. So up lumbered this fellow, and boisterously asked 'What it would cost to have *his* portrait painted'? 'Pent you?' stuttered Tam quizzically regarding the pock-pitted features, 'P-p-pent you? Lo'd, min, I wad hae t-t-tae p-p-potty ye first' (putty).

I acknowledge with deep gratitude the many friendly, indeed flattering, reviews the book has received from my brethren of the press, and I am very gratefully conscious of the kind offices and friendly regard of my good counsellor and publisher. 'May ilka guid attend him,' an' lang may the fine old homely virtues, which I have feebly perhaps, but faithfully I hope, endeavoured to portray in these pages, be found flourishing among, and characteristic of, 'Oor ain fouk,' all over this ancient realm, ay, 'an' farrer tee,' as the old Deeside wifie would say.

Morley's Hotel, London,
10*th April* 1894.

PREFACE

I WAS in hopes that this book would have been published about the time of the Disruption Jubilee Celebrations of last year, but when it was nearly finished I met with a sudden and serious accident, which for months compelled me to give up all active mental and physical exertion. My father was one of the heroes of the Disruption movement, and the main *motif* of this book is to show what he did and suffered in those stirring times 'for conscience' sake.' I have used part of the pamphlet which he himself began to write, but never finished, and which he wished to leave to his sons and friends as a record and vindication of the active part he took in that memorable conflict. Other fragmentary materials have reached me from time to time, from various sources, and I have endeavoured to weave these into a connected and readable narrative; and it appeals primarily to all who, by descent or sympathy, take a personal interest in the history of that splendid struggle for liberty of conscience and freedom of

action in regard to church government, which is known as 'The Disruption of 1843.'

I am hopeful, however, that my book may appeal to a wider circle of readers, namely, all who are interested in the old homely rural life of Scotland. I have tried to give glimpses and sketches of many of the quaint customs, the curious oddities of style and dress, the old-fashioned habitudes of thought, and the strongly-marked individualities of the older generation, which are fast vanishing before the breath of so-called modern progress. I humbly trust that my descriptions of the glen, the village, and country town life; the school games and schoolboy rhymes, the rural industries, the queer characters, the humorous episodes, the peculiar institutions, the intellectual and religious outlook of the older generation, etc. etc.,—may interest the general reader, and form an acceptable contribution to the deeply-interesting volume of Scottish history reminiscence and portraiture which has been enriched by such masters of the craft as Galt, Scott, Dean Ramsay, Barrie, Crockett, George MacDonald, and many others.

With such I do not seek to class myself, for I have found the demands of my own large business as a merchant, and my pretty active participation in the public life of Australia, almost more than enough to tax my energy and industry to the full. Indeed, I increasingly find that political and commercial pursuits are becoming more and more incompatible with the

exercise of the literary faculty, so that I am keenly conscious of the literary defects of this volume. I have had to work at it amid distractions that at times proved almost overwhelming, and which more than once have forced me to suspend my task altogether.

In sorting my twenty years' collection of materials, I have had to set aside a multitude of stories of Scottish wit and humour, most of which I do not think have ever been printed. This collection is now almost ready for the press, and if the reception given to the present book be as encouraging as I am told by partial friends I may venture to expect, then my original collection of 'Mair Scotch Stories' may shortly be published.

To my genial friend, Professor M'Callum, of Sydney University, I must express my thanks for many a pleasant word of kindly encouragement.

JAMES INGLIS.

'Craigo,' Strathfield, N.S.W.,
1*st July* 1893.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

Our Glen: its physical Features—My Grandfather as described in *The Land of the Lindsays*—My Grandmother—Private Stills—Geordie White and the Gauger—Donal' and the Bees—Sandie Christison and the Bapteezin' o' the Bairn . Pages 1-12

CHAPTER II

The Glen Folk: their Characteristics—The Clachan of Tarf-side—Primitive Farming—A Fine Peasantry—The Eviction Policy denounced—The Expatriation of the People—Drinking Habits—Excellence of the Whisky—Sandie's Eulogium on his Dram—Turning the Tables on the Minister—'The Beam in the Eye' 13-21

CHAPTER III

Royal Visitors to 'The Glen'—Jeems Mitchell and the Queen's 'Powney'—The Queen and the Herd Laddie—Jeems and the Duke of Edinburgh—Craig-ma-skeldie—The Loch and its

Surroundings—Peat-reek—Char-fishing—The Falls of Unich —Dr. Guthrie and Auld Jannie—A Shepherd's Biblical Criticism—An Anecdote of Dr. Guthrie's . . Pages 22-32

CHAPTER IV

The Glen School—The Prevalent Kindly Spirit—Farmhouse Life—Character gauged from a Gastronomic Standpoint—A Stingy Mistress—Jock an' the Cheese—Two Parritch Stories—Outspokenness: Instances—An Interrupted Grace—Jeems Wricht pronounces Doom on Buonaparte—The Minister truly a Representative of the People—Value of Education—A Succession of Clerics—My Father and Uncle: their Boyhood and College Days—Parental Self-Denial—A College Challenge—A Fight and a Duel—A Brawl at Ballater—The Character of the old Manse and Old Minister—An Instance of his Quaint Humour —His Death 33-48

CHAPTER V

The Disruption of 1843—My Father's Disposition—His Share in the Fight—His Memorials of the Disruption—His Translation to Edzell in 1841—Great Increase of Congregation—Progress of the Controversy—Lord Panmure and Fox Maule—My Father's Estimate of Panmure's Character—'Persecutions for Conscience' Sake'—A Sore Bereavement—His Last Sermon in the Parish Kirk—A Noble Record 'for Conscience' Sake'—Old Dr. Grant's Story of 'the Flesh Pots'—The first Free Church Sermon—The Tent in the Wilderness—Increasing Hardships and Difficulties—Fidelity of the Flock—Humour under Privations—Preaching under Difficulties—Hostile Attitude of Opponents —Progress of the Struggle—Once more in a house of his own 49-66

CHAPTER VI

Boyish Recollections of the Disruption Sufferings—Our Village—Willie Carr—The 'Feeing' or 'Term' Market: its Sights and Sounds; its Evil Features—The Minister and the Drover—A Forced Declaration—Encounter with 'Dubrach' at Ballater Fair—My Father's Athletic Prowess—Dared by Geordie to 'Haud the Ploo'—The Result—How he cowed the Captain—Instances of his Strength—His Emotional Nature—An Honest Man! . . . . . Pages 67-83

CHAPTER VII

Our Village School—The Old-time Dominie—Anecdotes—Our Village Dominies—'Peter Pundwecht'—'Creeshie Pow'—Home Discipline of the old Régime—The Meagre Mental Equipment of our Dominie—Contrast between the Old System and the New—Our School Games and Boyish Toys: 'Bools and Peeries'; Hockey—Curling—'Gowf'—The Teetotum—Jeems Dunn's Letter—Lassies' Games—Quaint Old Rhymes and Customs—The Annual Blanket-washing—A Contrast—Hogmanay—The Shorter Carritches—School-book Rhymes—'Het Rows an' Butter Baiks'—'Nifferin''—Nursery Rhymes—A Schoolboy Conspiracy and how it ended . . 84-117

CHAPTER VIII

Our Village Characters: their Mental Attitude—Village Poet—Specimens of his Muse—Rob Osal', the Flesher—Daft Jamie—Willie Burness—Willie Hood—'Sneeshin' on the Cheap'—Robbie Welsh—Peter M'Kenzie—Anecdotes . . 118-130

CHAPTER IX

Village Occupations—The Handloom Weavers—Merchants and Merchanties—Various Types—Davit Elshender—A Story of the Egg Market—How Mrs. Paitterson turned the Tables—A Stingy Couple—Taking the Pledge—Strong Language—Story of Rev. Mr. Don—John Buchan's Prayer—A Banquet to the Laird—A Dear Denner—Effects of Mixing Drinks—Drinking Habits of the Time . . . . . Pages 131-146

CHAPTER X

My Mother's Folk—Montrose Skippers and the Baltic Trade—Presents from Abroad—A Partial Eclipse—The Homespun Era—Basket Mary—A Rigorous Caste System—'Tea-pairties'—Wullie D——'s Hoose-warming—A Sma' Gless—A Heartless Drucken Husband—Painter Tam—Anecdotes . . 147-160

CHAPTER XI

Local Jealousies between County Towns—Curious Nicknames—Aspersions on Brechin—Origin of the Term 'Reed Lichties'—A Sapient Toon Cooncil—Blin' Hughie o' Dundee—The 'Spooters' o' Farfar—Celebrities—Singer Jeemer—Peter Reid and the famous 'Farfar Rock'—The Drawl of the Mearns—Primitive Social Manners—'No the Whisky but the Here's t'ye!'—The Handloom Industry—Weavers' Rhymes—Bailie F—— and the Auctioneer—A Vanishing Bottle—Drinking Orgies and Wild Wagers—Amusing Instance of Local Jealousy 161-175

CHAPTER XII

Kirks—Ministers and Sermons—The Minister's Place in the Social and Intellectual Life of the People—Sermon Evolution—Tendency to become commonplace—A rather Exaggerated Parody—Impromptu on a 'Dreich' Preacher—Frank Self-criticism—The Brechin Beadle—The Collections and Plate at the Door—Candles—Peppermints—Anecdotes of Dr. Foote—An Outside View of the Subject—'Great Preevileges' o' the Auld Saints—Literalism of the old Bible Critics—Rendering Scripture History realistically — Humorous Instances — Aubraham's Bosom—Pawky Estimate of King David's Character—'The Scarlet Woman' . . . . . Pages 176-196

CHAPTER XIII

The Old Gloomy Theology—Dawn of a Brighter Faith—The Two Schools illustrated by Anecdote—Growing Tolerance of Scottish Clergy—Instances of the Old Intolerance—Weariness of Church Services—Anecdote of Dr. Kidd—'Making the best of both Worlds'—'Willie White an' how he cheated the Craws'—Sleeping Acquaintance—Length of Prayers—'Ma ain Bairn'—'Lat the Jews alane'—Old John Aitken the Beadle—'Resist a' Improvements'—Some Beadle Stories—Anecdotes—An Eccentric Minister—Plain Criticism—Estimate of my Father's Preaching—Examples of 'Exotic' Scottish Humour 197-214

CHAPTER XIV

The Sturdy, Self-reliant Spirit of the Older Generation contrasted with Modern Querulousness—An Unpromising Farm—Geordie

Ferrier, the Minister's Man—Co-operative Farming Fifty Years ago—A Farmer-Minister—Geordie's Peculiarities—The Drucken Barber and the Minister—Wattie Dunlop and the Barber—My Father's Fairness—A Grannie's Benediction—My Father's Strong Common-sense—A Disconcerted Fop—Characteristics of my Father and Mother—A Standing Joke—My Mother's Deep Piety and Keen Wit—Her Belief in Direct Answer to Prayer—An Authentic Instance—Her Earnestness and Humour—Her Sense of Duty—Contempt of Meanness—Quaint Criticism on Preaching—Her Farewell Charge to me . . . . . Pages 215-237

CHAPTER XV

A Hard-worked Minister—Vigorous of Mind and Body—Details of his Life and Character—Notes by my Brother George—The Manse Garden—Methodical Habits—Love of Children—Care for the Servants—Domestic Daily Routine—Fondness for a Joke—Some of his Stories—A Thievish Urchin—The Imperturbable Trespasser—Pat's Witty Answer—Habits in the Pulpit—His Favourites in History—Gentleness and Sweetness of Disposition—Private Devotion—Anecdotes of Dr. Cruden—Summary of the Old Minister's Character . . 238-252

CHAPTER XVI

'Oor ain Laddies'—What to do with the Boys—David the Boat-builder—An Eventful Career—Alexander the Merchant—An Early Start—Long Hours and Hard Work—A Swarm from the Parent Hive—The Merchant's Distinguished Career: his Character—Robert the Financier—Connection with the Volunteer Movement—My own Career—The Supposed 'Black

Sheep'—Tom the Planter: a Cannie, Couthie Bachelor—John the Student: his Brilliant Promise and Early Lamented Death—Willie the Banker: his Early Death—George the Minister—Henry 'the Shargar o' the Klekin'—A Typical Family—Colonising Tendencies of the Race—The Old Folks' Letters—Unique Circular Notes—Strange Use for a Tract . . . . . Pages 253-271

CHAPTER XVII

Declining Years—Increasing Infirmities—An Assistant and Successor appointed—The Last Sermon—Closing Scenes—His Strong Faith—Considerate to the Last—A Noble Dying Testimony—The End: 'Peace' 272-276

OOR AIN FOLK

CHAPTER I

Our Glen: its physical Features—My Grandfather as described in *The Land of the Lindsays* — My Grandmother — Private Stills—Geordie White and the Gauger—Donal' and the Bees—Sandie Christison and the Bapteezin' o' the Bairn.

I THINK our glen must have been one of the loveliest in all 'braid Scotland.'

By the poor hard-worked operatives in the lowland towns—weavers of Brechin or Forfar—a jaunt up 'The Glen' was looked forward to as one of the richest treats in the year; but in the old times, of which this chapter mostly treats, when my grandfather was, next to the Laird, the paramount authority in the parish, the Glen was but little known, and its beauties were seldom seen by any outsider. Nestling amid the shadows of surrounding hills, covered in the summer-time with crimson heather to their very summits, the Glen lay like an oasis of beauty, and nurtured in its various straths and valleys the hardy race of sturdy, independent, whole-souled peasantry, among whom

some of the finest types of quaint old Scottish character were ever to be met.

The North Esk runs its brawling course through the whole length of the Glen, thus originating the name 'Glenesk,' from which circumstance the natives were proud to call themselves 'Gleneskers'; but the polite name for the locality, in the mouths of outsiders, was and is 'Lochlee,' from the beautiful lake of that name in the northern part of the Glen in which the winding Esk finds its main source. Here the Glen sends its roots far away into the recesses of the Grampians, mighty spurs of which divide the main glen into numerous little nooks and lesser glens, all of which have special charms of their own. Some of them are remarkable for the weird grandeur and ruggedness of their mountain and crag scenery. In its lower reaches the river winds through fertile little straths, with every here and there snug farmhouses or cottar-shielings, and the stream is bordered by charming belts of the delicate pendulous birch, and the more sombre hazel and pine. The plash of falling water makes the air tremulous with melody on every side. The heather hills constitute a veritable sportsman's paradise, and away up on the mighty flanks of Mount Keen and Lochnagar the lordly stag may often be seen standing, clear-cut against the distant horizon, on some jutting spur.

The chief attraction to the antiquarian is the fine old feudal ruin of 'Invermark Castle,' its square keep frowning over the Esk where that river emerges from the lake. Almost in the shadow of the weather-worn old fortalice nestle the snug manse and quaint little

church, in which my grandfather ministered for well-nigh half a century; and perhaps I cannot do better than quote the following description of his character, taken from *The Land of the Lindsays*.[1] At page 89, Mr. Jervise says: 'Perhaps no minister ever approached closer than the late Mr. Inglis to the beautiful description that Goldsmith has left of his father in "The Deserted Village"; and although he enjoyed in reality more than "forty pounds a year," it is questionable, when his many charities are taken into account, whether he had much more to defray the expenses of a large family. But like the village preacher in that inimitable poem—

> Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
> Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place.
> Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,
> By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour:
> Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
> More skilled to raise the wretched, than to rise.

'Nor was it alone the homeless wanderer or "ruined spendthrift," that had his claims so often and so liberally allowed by the good man, whose kindness was so great that his manse has been likened more to an inn than to a private residence—but there the stranger, whether in search of health or pleasure, also found a ready and comfortable asylum. An amusing story is told of a gentleman who came over the hill one day on horseback when several pleasure parties were in the Glen. Their vehicles were, as usual, ensconced around the manse, and the minister was amusing himself alone in

[1] *The Land of the Lindsays*, by the late Andrew Jervise, F.S.A. Scotland. Published by David Douglas, Edinburgh, 1882.

the garden. Believing it to be a *bonâ fide* inn, and Mr. Inglis the landlord, the traveller leapt from his nag and called on his reverence to stable it up. No sooner said than done. Mr. Inglis, who was as fond of a joke as he was generous of heart, led the animal to the stable; and the rider, having seen his horse "all right," entered the house and called for *a dram*. The minister, still acting as "mine host," brought "the glass and big-bellied bottle," and good-humouredly supplied the demand; nor was it until the hour of his departure, when the bill was asked for, that the stranger discovered his mistake. Many similar traits,' continues the author, 'are told of the hospitality of Mr. Inglis; but he died in January 1837, and, in the emphatic language of many of his parishioners, "the Glen has never been like the same place since."'

Many quaint stories are told of the old minister.

My grandmother belonged to a good old middle-class family, her maiden name being 'Collier,' and one of her brothers was a famous factor of one of the great county magnates, and was a well-known character in his day.

I can well remember the gentle old granny, with her stiff gown of watered-silk brocade, her knitted Shetland shawl, black silk mitts, and spotless, high, starched cap, under which her silvered hair gleamed like a streak of driven snow. She had all the gentle manners of the courtly old régime and must have been a very beautiful woman in her young days. The cares of a large family, however, dependent on the very moderate income of a Highland minister in those days, had told their tale upon the once lithe and supple

frame, and when I remember her, the dear old face was seamed with countless wrinkles like the skin of a withered apple,—to which, indeed, it bore no slight resemblance,—and her breath was just as sweet as the aroma of the fruit. She always had her pockets—and what capacious pockets they were—full of dainties for the better-behaved and more-favoured of her grandchildren. I regret to say that while I may have been of the latter, I cannot claim to have belonged to the former category.

I never saw my grandfather; he had long 'gone to his rest' before I appeared upon this troubled scene; but to this day stories are current among the glens of his quaint humour and kindly ways, which show that he must have possessed, in no ordinary degree, the affections of the dwellers of these secluded valleys. They were keen critics too, and possessed of wonderful shrewdness, and one who could thus impress his individuality upon them must have been a man of no mean attainments. All the stories I have heard of him seem to bear this out. Of course the times were rude. Many of the old customs have happily long since died out. It was before the era of large farms and great deer forests. The modern shooting-lodge was an unknown institution, and wire fencing was a thing not then invented.

The distilling of illicit spirits was a flourishing industry in nearly every glen, and many a fierce fight took place between the vendors of that toothsome commodity known as 'Peat-reek' whisky, and the custodians of His Majesty's Excise. On one occasion a famous old smuggler named 'Geordie White' rather

cleverly evaded the minion of the law, who, acting upon information received, had ridden up the Glen, full of high hope that he was about to make an important capture.

Geordie had been long suspected; but his precautions had always been so well taken, that no overt act had ever been proved against him. Indeed the authorities more than half suspected that under the influence of a judicious, occasional 'tip,' the resident gauger saw fit to wink at some of Geordie's ongoings, and that he might have succeeded, had he done his duty, in bringing the smuggler within the punitive provisions of the act.

It had accordingly been deemed advisable that a change should be made, and a new exciseman, burning with zeal and full of officiousness, had but lately come to the Glen. He was anxious to distinguish himself, and determined if possible to capture the redoubtable Geordie White, the leader of the gang of illicit distillers, whose operations had for years been on a large scale, and who indeed supplied nearly every household with potent usquebaugh for many miles around.

The new gauger had received what he considered reliable and trustworthy information from a hereditary enemy of the White faction that, were he to proceed by a certain route so as to take Geordie's house in flank, on a certain day, he would detect him in his illegal occupation, and find conclusive proof sufficient to ensure a conviction. As a matter of fact the information was correct, and at the time when the gauger set out on his mission, Geordie's still was in full operation, and he and his son were busily engaged in distilling as

pretty a sample of whisky as ever had perfumed the caller air of the Glen. It happened to be the beginning of winter, and the hoary frost had bound every placid reach of water in its iron embrace. To get to Geordie's house the gauger had to cross a small ford, but when he came to it he found it frozen over; and the black, thin ice did not look very inviting, especially as he did not know the depth of the water beneath. Knowing the treacherous nature of these mountain streams, but quite unaware that this was a perfectly safe crossing-place, he did not like to trust himself and horse to the dangerous-looking ice, though, from the signs he saw, he felt convinced that he had come at an opportune moment so far as his quest was concerned. He was not, however, brave enough to trust himself to the mercy of unknown depths, and so raising his voice he hailed the shieling.

Young Geordie had in the meantime apprised his father of the advent of this unwelcome visitor, and they were both desperately engaged in trying to hide the evidences of their illegal pursuit. The grain and worts had hardly been concealed, and while the young fellow sought to carry away the still and other appurtenances to a favourite hiding-place, auld Geordie sallied forth in his shirt-sleeves, and with a long hay-fork in his hand.

The gauger hailed him: 'What is the depth of the water, my man?'

Geordie's keen and ready wit immediately jumped to a solution of the difficulty, and putting on an air of the utmost innocence—though inly cursing the treachery of the informer who as he now divined had set the

myrmidon of the law upon his track—he sauntered down to the edge of the stream, and said : 'Hoots, man ! ye have ta'en the wrang road ; the ford is fower miles up the watter.'

'Why, I was told this was the ford,' said the gauger, looking at the black inkiness in front of him, which was rendered all the more dangerous-looking by the thin sheet of ice which hid the real character of the stream. 'Let me see the depth, man,' he said again.

'Ay, sir ! there is nae boddom here ava,' said Geordie, and with that, going to the edge, he made believe to crack a hole with his heel, and then putting in his long fork-handle, he slanted it away in under the ice, stooping down as it disappeared, until at length both fork and arm had been hidden, and then withdrawing them he called out to the dumbfoundered exciseman : 'You see there is nae boddom here ; you will hae to gang up the watter to the ford.'

You can imagine the look of disgust on the gauger's face, but being more of a simpleton than the comrade whose place he had taken, he was obliged to make a merit of necessity and cantered off, thus giving time to Geordie and his son to remove all traces of the still.

This was a favourite story of my grandfather's, and if all reports speak true, many a greybeard of good whisky reached the manse upon which the king's tribute never had been paid.

Having a large family of daughters besides his two sons, of whom more anon, the old minister had to eke out his scanty income, and find the means for his profuse hospitality, by the exercise of much ingenious industry.

He was an excellent farmer, and introduced for the first time into the Glen many applications of science to agriculture, which at the time were much in advance of the rather slovenly ideas of the primitive race of farmers amongst whom he ministered. Amongst other minor industries he kept a famous breed of bees, and the sale of hives and honey formed no inconsiderable portion of the manse income.

On one occasion, it seems, he had sent off his man to Edzell market to dispose of a 'skep' of bees; the seductions of the village fair, however, proved too much for Donal', and under the twin temptations of whisky-toddy and congenial company Donal's honesty and fidelity went by the board, and he deposited the proceeds of the skep of bees in the village alehouse, with the result that he arrived home nearly 'blin' fou' and almost unintelligible.

My grandfather, in spite of his queries, could get nothing out of Donal', but a long, rambling rigmarole of the most imaginative character about the lost siller. Seeing clearly, however, what had happened, the old minister in great irritation cut him short with the following outburst of broadest vernacular: 'Hoots! ye leein' sumph, ye've drucken the haill hypothec; I can hear the vera bees bizzin i' yer wame!'

I may give another of his favourite anecdotes, and one which is characteristic of the rude outspokenness of the time:—

A kindly old minister in the neighbouring parish had taken to himself a second wife, his first having died. Being a delicate little lady but very amiable, she had won the affections of all the rude shepherds in

the Glen. Now in these times, as all readers of Scottish reminiscences are aware, the sheep dogs formed a most important element in the life of a Highland parish, and indeed were as regular attendants at 'the ordinances' of divine worship as their pastoral owners. Sluts were not so frequently used for shepherding purposes as dogs, being less tractable. The local name for a slut was 'bick.'

Now a brawny shepherd of the name of 'Sandie Christison,' whose ailing wife had been attended in her sickness with much patient gentleness by the minister's wife, happened to have just had an addition to her already large family, and after a conjugal parliament had sat, it had been determined that the wean should be named after their beloved benefactress. Accordingly one evening, after fauldin' the sheep, Sandie trudged away down the Glen, through the thick-falling snow and gathering mists, to have an interview with the minister, and arrange the important preliminaries of the meditated christening.

Arriving at the manse door, he gave a vigorous summons with his trusty staff, and the lassock having answered the 'chap,' proceeded to acquaint the minister in his study of the arrival of this late visitor.

'If ye please, sir, Sandie Christison's come doon the Glen to see ye.'

'Send him in, Isie; send him in.'

'Come awa' in bye,' cried the minister, as the towering bulk of Sandie, his tawny yellow locks glistening with half-melted snow, appeared in the doorway of the snug sanctum.

'It's a gey coorse nicht I'm thinkin', oot theroot.'

'Deed ay, it is a' that, sir, and I'm thinkin' it'll be thicker afore I'm back hame.'

'Aweel, aweel, come awa' in and tell me what I can do for ye,' said the minister; 'and, Isie, jist bring in a wee bit drappie to slocken Sandie, for I've nae doot he's some drouthie efter sic a lang walk.'

'Isie' was not long in reappearing with the 'materials'; and after these had been in due course sampled, Sandie came to the object of his visit.

'Ye see, meenister,' he said, a little diffidently, 'Kirsty's jist haen anither ane.'

'Bless me,' said the minister, 'anither ane? Is't a laddie or a lassie this time?'

'Oh 'deed, sir, it's a lassie! an' a bonnie black-ee'd bit teddie she is, na!'

'Ay, ay, an' so ye'll be wantin' to arrange for the christenin' nae doot?'

''Deed that's jist fat brocht me doon the Glen this nicht,' quoth Sandie.

'Weel, weel,' said the kind-hearted minister, seeing Sandie was still a little blate, 'jist tak' an "eik"[1] Sandie, it'll no hurt ye.'

'Eh, sirss! but it's jist prime,' said Sandie, wanting no second invitation. And then arrangements were made that on 'Feursday nicht,' after the prayer meeting up the Glen, the baby would be baptized. A pleasant chat ensued, and the shepherd made for the door. He had not got it half opened, however, before the minister recalled him, and said—

'By the bye, Sandie, ye've no tell't me what ye're to ca' the bit lassock.'

[1] An 'eik,' an additional quantity.

'Hoots,' said Sandie, 'I clean forgot that. Ye see, sir,' he continued, 'my wife has ta'en sic a fancy tae your wife, that naething 'll setisfee her but she maun gi'e your wife a present o' the name.'

This was Sandie's way of saying that the child was to be called after the minister's wife, and the genial, reverend, old soul made due acknowledgments of the delicate compliment thus implied.

Again Sandie made for the door, but, as a sudden thought struck him, he returned to the table; and, as if in pure absent-mindedness, he filled out another dram which he slowly quaffed, and then said—

'Od, meenister, what wi' yer crack, an' yer fine auld whisky, I had near clean forgot the maist principal pairt o' the haill errant.'

'Ay, an' what micht that be, Sandie?'

'Weel, it's jist this, sir. Fat *is* yer wife's name?'

'Oh, it's Fanny.'

'Fanny!' said Sandie, with an air of intense disgust, his whole shepherd instincts rising in revolt at such a cognomen. 'Fanny! Feech! that's a bick's name. I'll no ha'e that!'

What the minister said or thought is not recorded, but 'the bick's' name was not bestowed on the child.

CHAPTER II

The Glen Folk: their Characteristics—The Clachan of Tarf-side—Primitive Farming—A Fine Peasantry—The Eviction Policy denounced—The Expatriation of the People—Drinking Habits—Excellence of the Whisky—Sandie's Eulogium on his Dram—Turning the Tables on the Minister—'The Beam in the Eye.'

THE Glen folk, as a rule, corresponded very much with their environment, being a stalwart, shaggy-haired, bright-eyed, clean-limbed, active race of hardy men; and the women, quite accustomed to take their share in all the customary avocations of such a Highland parish. There were few large farms in those days, as I have said; but every little bit of arable land, every little strath, through which some clear running brooklet ran, contributing its quota to the main artery, the North Esk—every low-lying bit of ground, swept down by winter floods and storms from the flanks of the mountains, and every encouraging level stretch of heather—all these were sufficient, each to sustain one or more families in rough comfort; and although the living was rude, the houses not much to look at, and the tillage perhaps of the most primitive character, yet each family was above the reach of want, as all possessed at least one cow and sometimes more, and certainly most of

them had the run of more than the proverbial three acres.

The population, scattered as it was, amounted to a pretty fair total when the census of the whole Glen was taken. The scanty crops of barley and oats, with sometimes a patch of rye, potatoes, and turnips, eked out the winter forage for the live stock—this gave work sufficient for the 'cottar' and his family; and then there was always the annual task of cutting the peats in the peat-moss up the hillside, drying them, carrying home, and stacking them; thus laying in an ample supply of that delightful old Highland fuel for the long cold nights of winter.

In sober truth it was rather a hard, unlovely life; not much of the æsthetic about it from a modern point of view; and yet the entire peasantry was of such sterling character, that very simple pleasures sufficed to meet their social wants; and a deep love of all the beauties of nature, scattered with such lavish hand on every side, warmed the hearts of these homely people. Indeed all the old-fashioned virtues of thrift, plodding industry, absence of pretence, genuine hospitality, and deep, sincere piety, were characteristic of the Glen people as a whole. Of course there were here and there some exceptions to the usual rule. The more lawless spirits, for instance, did not think it morally wrong to spear the salmon, or snare a hare, or even bring down a royal stag, if the opportunity came in their way; and, as I have already hinted, their notions in regard to His Majesty's revenue in the matter of excise were very lax.

The little clachan of Tarf-side was the centre of

what corporate life there was in this secluded region. Here was the house of the factor, the little, low-roofed, heather-thatched, general store licensed for the sale of tea and tobacco, the stock of which was of the most oddly miscellaneous and incongruous character imaginable ; presided over by an ancient snuffy dame, possessed of a high mutch and a shrill voice, who knew every item of gossip in the Glen, took charge of the Post-Office, and concerned herself with the domestic affairs of the whole of the population generally. Then there was the Masonic Hall, mysterious rites being celebrated at intervals in the same, which were spoken of with bated breath by all the youngsters in the place. There were also an Episcopal Church, a blacksmith's shop, and one or two other little dwellings. To this little clachan innumerable footpaths converged from every mountain spur and secluded valley in the tumbled chain of the Grampians, that rolled their crimson slopes like billows of fire all around when the heather was in flame—as happened once a year, when the great heather-burnings took place, so that the sheep might have a feast on the fresh young sprouts, that took the place of the old tangled 'hagg,' after the purifying flames had passed over it.

The ploughing was of the most primitive character, sometimes the 'coo' and the 'cuddy' being yoked together ; and not unfrequently the mother of the family would take the place of either 'coo' or 'cuddy,' and drag the wooden plough during the long weary day, so that the not over-kindly earth might be prepared to receive the precious seed that had been stored over the rafters from the last year's crop.

Porridge and brose composed the ordinary fare. Trout of fine quality could always be had from the burns and river. Rabbits, hares, partridges, grouse, blackcock, wild duck, and other winged denizens of the heathery wastes, might always be procured. In those days game-preserving had not become the fine art that it is now. The little garden, or kail-yaird, supplied abundance of humble vegetables, while small fruits of various sorts, such as gooseberries, red and black currants, raspberries, strawberries, etc., were the never-failing adjunct to the garden ; and every cottar's wife made it her pride to lay in annually a stock of jams and preserves, which, with honey and beautiful butter, formed the relish to the substantial bannocks and delicious scones, in the baking of which every housewife was an adept.

There were no horticultural societies in those days to encourage cottage gardening by gifts and prizes. None of the modern stimulants which seem to be found necessary to induce industry of any sort amongst the so-called lower classes then existed. Industry and thrift were the ingrained habits of the people ; and the dividing line between pinching poverty and the modest supply of daily-recurring wants was so thin, that the people always had borne in upon them very practically the full meaning of the old scriptural adage, 'He that worketh not, neither shall he eat.'

Of course there were large sheep farms, embracing all the heather country unfit for tillage, and on these large farms many of the cottars found employment as shepherds ; and where there was arable land in any quantity, there would be a few ploughmen and general

farm-labourers ; but as a rule the people were essentially resident peasantry, each cultivating his own little holding, training his family—and they were generally large families—in habits of thrift, industry, self-denial, self-respect, earnest piety, sturdy independence, and living patriotism, with a genuine contempt for everything artificial, unreal, and meanly conventional. In countless glens, such as these, the hardy, frugal, industrious peasantry of Scotland were reared—the race which was the crowning glory of their poor but beautiful country ; and no words of mine can adequately express the disgust I feel, when I think of the greed and ruthless cold-blooded cruelty, which depopulated so many of these beautiful glens ; turning busy haunts of rural industry into sheep walks and deer forests ; banishing thousands of God-fearing, noble-hearted patriots, for ever from the land they loved so well ; and scattering the ashes on many a hearth, around whose genial fire so many fine traditions had clustered, and so many of the noblest attributes of the genuine, kindly, old Scottish character been manifested.

To the thoughtful traveller, even now, it is a sad, sad sight to come across the evidences of former habitation. In many of the lonely glens, where now no peat-reek curls peacefully into the clear blue sky, a few blackened hearthstones and rotting door-posts, mournfully protruding themselves from the rank wilderness of nettles and docks, are the last sad remains of what was once a bright and happy home, giving shelter to a hardy, industrious, patriotic people, whose descendants, scattered far and wide, still look back with a loving, lingering fondness towards the bonnie heather hills,

from many a backwoods home in far-off Canada, torrid India, or sunny Australia.

Whole chapters might be written of the sheep-washing, sheep-shearing, the merry harvest-time, and the long, chill, winter nights, when song and story kept time with the monotonous whirr of the spinning-wheel, around the great wide ingle, where the peat fire burned steady and low. But this of course is an oft-told tale, though the memory of it is fast fading away in the minds of many of the rising generation—the more's the pity. No matter though princely revenues be still further swelled by the high rentals extracted from American millionaires and factory plutocrats, the much-vaunted advantages of game-preserving and big farming areas can never make up for the loss of the kindly-hearted, simple-minded, patriotic old peasantry, who through the cupidity and selfishness of a privileged few were expatriated from the land whose pride and stay they were.

In every such little clachan there was generally some old veteran, returned from foreign wars, bearing honourable marks of loyal service for king and country; and dozens of eager recruits would annually go forth from these glens to fight the battles of Britain; but now, alas! the Queen's soldiers have to be culled from the spindle-shanked, pigeon-chested, tallow-faced, undersized striplings that haunt the purlieus of our great manufacturing towns.

Much has no doubt been said, and many extraordinary stories have been told, of the drinking habits of the people; but it should never be forgotten that if the libations to Bacchus were plentiful, the whisky was

pure and good. The frugal fare of oatmeal must have necessitated marvellously robust digestive powers; while the free, open-air life, and exposure to the breath of the mountains, enabled men to assimilate whisky in a way which in these degenerate times seems amazing and almost incredible. As a matter of fact, to this day, in those parts, no man would ever think of adding water to his whisky—that would be an indignity to the king of liquors which were altogether unpardonable. But even in those times there must have been qualities and degrees of excellence amongst the various local centres, as certain brands were always more prized than others.

A good instance of this is recalled to me by a humorous little anecdote of one of my good wife's aunts, who was the thrifty housewife of a large farm near Tarland, in Aberdeenshire. It seems that an old carrier from Aberdeen had made his usual weekly call, and the frugal lady, who kept two kinds of whisky—one for the men and one for the goodman *par excellence* —happened to have run short of the more potent and fiery decoction with which she was wont to satisfy the less educated palates of the ploughmen; so she said to Sandie the carrier: 'I suppose, Sandie, you will be nane the waur o' a dram?' Sandie responded with alacrity: 'Deed, mem, ye may weel say that, for I hinna slockened ma drouth this haill blessed day.'

'Aweel, Sandie,' said the guidwife, 'I'm sorry I'm oot o' yer usual, but I hae some fine Lochnagar here that I keep especially for the maister.'

'Eh, mem,' said Sandie, with a pleased twinkle in his eye, 'aweel awat it'll be nane the waur for that!'

at the same time smacking his lips in pleased anticipation.

The good lady produced a big-bellied bottle and ample glass, and pouring out a full measure of the mellow nectar, she handed it to the expectant carrier, who took off his cap and devoutly wiped his lips, as if he was saying a mental grace over the expected treat. Gently poising the glass in his fingers, he looked at it with loving eyes, slowly threw his head back, reverently raised the glass to his lips, and then with a sudden jerk the mellow fluid gurgled down the gratefully-receptive thrapple. A long, deep sigh of exquisite content followed, and then with a tremulous voice, pregnant with the deepest feeling, he murmured to the good lady : 'Losh, mem, I wonder ye can hae't i' the hoose an' no tak' it!' A similar eulogium is mentioned by Dean Ramsay in one of his inimitable stories. Another good story, I believe of the same carrier, is told : that on one occasion he had just been the recipient of rather a pompous and long-winded reproof from the minister of a certain parish in these parts, who had been lecturing him on his intemperate habits. The divine, who was in truth rather fond of a dram himself, and whose nasal organ bore ample testimony to the frequency of his libations, received the quite unexpected and rather disconcerting reply :—

'Weel, meenister, there are mair broon pigs comes tae the manse than tae ony ither hoose i' the pairish.'

The rather crestfallen cleric had nothing more to say, as in his conscience he was forced to acknowledge the truth of the old carrier's rejoinder. For the benefit of any poor benighted foreigner from 'South of Tweed,'

who may honour me by perusing these pages, I may interpret that 'a broon pig' is 'a greybeard,' or demi-john of whisky.

Another retort of much the same kind is one which I have seen in print, but which needs no apology for being reproduced here.

'John,' said a clergyman to one of his flock, 'you should become a teetotaller—you have been drinking again to-day.' 'Did you never take a wee drop yourself, sir?' inquired John. 'Ah, but, John, you must look at your circumstances and mine.' 'Verra true,' quoth John; 'but, sir, can you tell me how the streets of Jerusalem were keepit sae clean?' 'No, John, I cannot tell you that.' 'Weel, sir, it was just because every one keepit his own door clean!' replied John, with an air of triumph. John was never catechised after that.

CHAPTER III

Royal Visitors to 'The Glen'—Jeems Mitchell and the Queen's 'Powney'—The Queen and the Herd Laddie—Jeems and the Duke of Edinburgh—Craig-ma-skeldie—The Loch and its Surroundings—Peat-reek—Char-fishing—The Falls of Unich—Dr. Guthrie and Auld Jannie—A Shepherd's Biblical Criticism—An Anecdote of Dr. Guthrie's.

We sometimes had distinguished visitors to 'our glen.' Balmoral, the royal residence, lay just over the dividing range which separated the Esk waters from the beauties of Deeside.

Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen used occasionally to make a more distant excursion than usual; and in the early happy days of her married life she, with her beloved consort, Albert the Good, honoured our glen with a visit. They came across the hills to Glenesk, in fact, several times, and a beautiful granite monument has been erected in Glenmark, over a clear, cool, mountain spring, bubbling up fresh from the primeval granite, now known as 'The Queen's Well,' beside which the royal party used to rest and have their simple luncheon.

It may serve somewhat to indicate the primitive character of 'oor ain folk' in the Glen if I repeat a

story of one of these visits, of which old Jeems Mitchell was the hero. Jeems was head keeper and deerstalker-in-chief to Lord Panmure, whose splendid shooting-lodge at Invermark is now one of the most beautiful and well-appointed of many such modern mansions in the Highlands. Jeems was the most unconventional of men, and a splendid specimen of the typical Highlander. He was perhaps more familiar with each feature of the trackless wilderness of heather and moss, which stretched for miles around great Lochnagar, than any man living. To honest Jeems, therefore, had been entrusted the highly honourable and onerous task, on one of these occasions, of guiding the royal company down the devious and steep descent from Mount Keen to Glenmark.

One or two pleasant halts to view the scenery had been made by the way, and Jeems, nothing loath indeed, had imbibed several stiff refreshers that had been pressed upon him by various members of the Queen's party. The pony Her Majesty happened to be riding had not been a judicious selection. It was constantly stopping short, and had stumbled slightly once or twice, much to Jeems's annoyance, filling him with nervous apprehensions for the safety of its royal burden. At length his Celtic irritability, increased, no doubt, by the liberal supplies of whisky he had quaffed, could no longer be restrained. The whisky and his annoyance combined rose quite superior to his awe of the royal presence, and at length, with an impetuous outburst, he exclaimed to the astonished monarch: 'That's a d———d fitterin' brute o' a powney o' yours, Mistress Queen!' to the outward apparent horror, but to the

inward delight, of most of the attendants. What answer Her Majesty vouchsafed is not recorded.

Stories about the Queen and her kindly, homely intercourse with the cottagers about Balmoral are 'legion,' as every one knows; but I may be pardoned for reproducing the following, which is one of the best I have heard.

One day when Her Majesty was standing on the public road near Balmoral, sketching the castle from a particular point, a flock of sheep approached. Her Majesty, being intent on her work, took little notice of the flock, and merely moved a little nearer to the side of the road. A boy in charge of the sheep shouted at the top of a stentorian voice: 'Stan' oot o' the road, 'oman, and lat the sheep gae by!' Her Majesty not moving out of the way quite so fast as the shepherd wished, he again shouted: 'Fat are ye stan'in' there for? Gang oot o' that and lat the sheep pass!' One of Her Majesty's attendants, who had been at a distance, on hearing his royal mistress thus rudely assailed, went up to the shepherd, and thus addressed him: 'Do you know who it is you have been speaking so rudely to, boy?' 'Na—I neither ken nor care; but, be she fa' she likes, she sudna be i' the sheep's road.' 'That's the Queen,' said the official. The boy looked astonished, and, after recovering his senses, said, with great simplicity: 'The Queen! Od, fat way disna she pit on claes that fouk can ken her?'

On another occasion, when the Duke of Edinburgh was on a visit to the Earl of Dalhousie at Invermark Lodge, he happened to be out on the hill one day after the deer, and had as a gillie the same old Jeems Mitchell

of Inchgrundle. The Duke possibly was not as good an executant with the rifle as with the fiddle-bow. It seems, at any rate, that after one or two misses, he fired very widely at a small herd of deer some distance away. Poor old Jeems, inly disgusted, but wishing to be complimentary, observed, with a quaint confusion of ideas as to the right title of His Royal Highness: 'Ay, yer Richteousness! but ye've pallached the snoots o' thae yins.'

For many years the genial and eloquent Dr. Guthrie —whose noble work in connection with the Ragged School movement and whose marvellous pulpit oratory made his name a household word all over Scotland in the days of my youth, and whose memory even now is kept green among the hills and glens where his stalwart figure was so often a conspicuous object—used to spend part of his summer holidays 'up the Glen.' He generally took up his head-quarters with Jeems and his good wife Betty.

Jeems's house and farm-steading lay in a snug corner under the sheltering shade of the beetling cliff which was known locally as The Craig-ma-skeldie. Amid the almost inaccessible craggy fissures the golden eagle had his eyrie, and sometimes the cragsmen would be let down the face of the cliff to do battle with the royal bird, when the young eaglets or the rare eggs had become objects of desire to some of the sportsmen who used to partake of Panmure's hospitality at the shooting-lodge of Invermark across the loch. In front of the farmhouse, known as 'Inchgrundle,' stretched the lovely loch. Its waters lay clear and cool, shadowed by mighty hills on all sides, reflecting in the still, sheltered

coves and calm reaches along the shores, great crags of lichened granite and masses of crimson heather. At the southern extremity of the loch was a ruined chapel, which local tradition dated back to the time of the Culdees. A ruinous wall of red sandstone slabs, gray with moss and perforated with driving storms, ran irregularly round the desolate and deserted graveyard, where 'the rude forefathers of the hamlet' slept. In places the dashing wavelets of the loch had undermined the wall, and had eaten their way into the sacred enclosure, so that on the sandy, shingly strand, stone slabs, pieces of rude mortuary sculpture, and even at times, after a stormy winter, bits of ancient oak coffins and still more ghastly emblems of departed mortality might be seen by the angler, as he cast his line from the top of the crumbling wall. The water here was brown and deep, almost black in places, and as it was close to where the North Esk took its first leap outward from the parent loch, it was a favourite place for the salmon and the big brown trout that made the loch their chosen haunt.

A number of great gnarled pine-trees stretched their gaunt arms over the buildings of Inchgrundle. They dropped resinous tears upon the roofs, and from the wide chimneys arose the pungent and aromatic peat-reek, day and night throughout the year. The fires never went out on the Glen hearths. There was always 'a gathering peat' slowly smouldering, even in the hot drowsy days of summer. The rafters were black, and glistened with the omnipresent reek. The blankets and bed-clothes were redolent with the peculiar penetrating odour; even the very meal and whisky partook

of the all-prevailing peaty flavour. In the calmest days there would be a strange, weird sound stirring through every needle-like leaf of these old pines—a low susurration, as if the ghosts of long bygone storms were holding mysterious converse with the trembling branches, recalling memories of the vanished past, when the young sap pulsed through the green boughs before the trees had become gnarled and twisted, surly with age, and seared by exposure to successive winter blasts. A brawling burn roared and tumbled over granite boulders at the end of the house, and if you followed its noisy waters up the height, they would conduct you to one of the loveliest little mountain lochs—not much bigger than a tarn, in fact—nestling in a nook of the Craig, and noted for its teeming stock of the delicate and dainty char. This little lake was known as Easter Carlochie—a corruption, doubtless, of Char Loch. Its neighbour, Wester Carlochie, lay in a corresponding nook of the mountains some miles to the north-west. There are only, I believe, some five places in the United Kingdom where the beautiful char are to be found. It is a shy fish, preferring generally to remain close to the bottom, and but rarely rising to the fly, though amenable to the seductions of a judicious bait, as I have often proved. Its back is of a dull, earthy-looking tint, but the under side of the fins and the belly are of a brilliant ruddy hue, almost carmine-coloured ; and when one has hooked his char, it is a beauteous sight to see the struggling fish darting hither and thither, like a ray of imprisoned sunshine, through the brown peaty waters of the secluded loch. The char gives splendid sport, as he fights lustily, and demands a full exercise of all

the arts of the angler to land him safely, without damage to rod and tackle.

Farther up the Glen, after rounding a salient buttress of the mighty Craig-ma-skeldie, the valley opens out, and here the lush grass grows thick over the little enclosures of what were once cultivated fields, and where, even now, wild rasp, and 'grossart,' and currant bushes are the mute and mournful evidences of the depopulating policy of the rich landholders, who prefer deer and moor-fowl to a hardy peasantry. Where the range of girdling mountains rears its ramparts across the valley, there is a cleft in the great rocky barrier; and through this cleft the waters of the upland bogs find their way downwards, to fill the great hollow that forms Loch Lee, and is the cradle of the winding Esk.

The burn here exhibits itself as a very fine waterfall. The tawny waters bound clear over the precipice in a sheer leap of full one hundred feet; and when the burn is in spate, the thunderous roar of the angry linn makes the hillsides reverberate with ringing resonance, and can be heard miles away re-echoing through the lonely glens. So that when this sullen, booming roar is heard the shepherds or gamekeepers whisper to themselves: 'Save's a', sirrs, but the Unich's in an angry mood the day.' This splendid sight is but little known, even now, so secluded is the place; but the Falls of Unich are worth going many a mile to see.

Amid these scenes it was the delight of the good Doctor Guthrie to drink in fresh inspiration, and gather renewed health and strength for his arduous

work among the dens and slums of Edinburgh. He was a man of stalwart frame, had a rugged but kindly countenance, and was possessed by a most insatiable curiosity. One good story of this trait of his character has already seen its way into print; but my father used to tell it with great glee, and it may bear repetition, as I have never seen it told as he could tell it.

One day, in the course of his peregrinations, the worthy doctor, who was known all through the glens as 'Lang Tam Guthrie,' found himself in the vicinity of a lowly 'theek hoosie,' inhabited by a humble old 'cottar wifie' named Janet Trotter. 'Jannie' was preparing her repast, and a rather savoury smell came from the bubbling pot, which indeed set the salivary glands of the stalwart divine in action. His curiosity at once prompted him to ask what was in the pot. 'Jannie,' removing the short, black, greasy pipe from her toothless 'chafts,' mumbled out the information that she was 'makkin' broth.' This did not satisfy the Doctor however, who pursued his inquiries, and would take no denial till he had found out from poor old 'Jannie' every constituent in the savoury mess—from the bit 'braxy mutton' down to the 'syboes,' and 'leeks,' and 'taties,' and 'kail,' not even forgetting the 'pepper and saut.' 'Jannie' was not famed for the best of tempers; but the white necktie and air of distinction of the tall visitor had the effect of rendering her wonderfully civil and communicative.

Shortly afterwards my father, in the course of his usual visitations, called on 'Jannie.' and in the

course of conversation the visit of the tall, inquisitive stranger was alluded to, and all the circumstances detailed. 'Oh!' said my father, 'that wad jist be "lang Tam Guthrie" — the famous preacher; ye ken he's bidin' at Inchgrundle.' 'Od sake!' said the old wife; 'so that wis the famous Doctor Guthrie, was it?' 'No other,' said my father. 'An' what think ye o' the great Doctor now that ye hiv seen him, Jannie?'

'Dod, sir,' said the old body, with a gleam of humour in her eye, 'he's no a bad sort o' a chiel, but he's a most michty catecheezer. As fac's am leevin', he wad speir the vera guts oot o' a wheelbarrow.' The worthy doctor enjoyed this rough criticism on his *questionable* character as heartily as my father, who of course took an early opportunity of telling him what Jannie had thought of him.

Dr. Guthrie very frequently preached open-air sermons to the Glen folk and any visitors who might chance to be in the neighbourhood; and his fame as an orator was always certain to ensure a large congregation even in that sequestered parish. One of these deeply interesting gatherings forms the subject of a fine picture by Maclise, I think it was, and which must be familiar to many who read this book, by the engravings which were very popular and widespread in my younger days.

I do not know if the worthy Doctor, in any of his preachings on the hillside, had such an experience as one of his clerical brethren in the Highlands had on a similar occasion. I think the story has been told by the dear old Dean. The worthy minister had

mounted a sod wall to address the reverently-expectant crowd of plaided hearers ranged on the heather in front of him. Unwittingly to himself he had taken his stand on an ants' or emmets' nest, and in the fervour of his exhortation he disturbed the serenity of the busy little colony of black biting 'beasties' underneath his feet. Out they sallied in an angry swarm, and rapidly began to attack the intruder, running up his legs and swarming inside his pantaloons. The poor minister, not comprehending the situation, but keenly conscious of the hostile activity of the enraged colony, grew pale and red by turns, and no longer able to maintain his equanimity, blurted out to the amazed congregation :—

'My dear brethren, I may hae the word o' God in ma mooth, but I believe the vera deil himsel's gotten intill ma breeks.'

He had to beat an ignominious retreat and leave the dyke in full possession of the emmets.

This calls to mind a good shepherd story in which rather an original piece of Bible criticism occurred. The shepherd was a quiet old character, named Sandy Murray, and he dearly loved to engage in a long philosophical or theological discussion with his lenient master, who patiently humoured his little weaknesses. One day old Murray opened the conversation by saying :—

'Ye'll mind, sir, thon story o' the ninety-and-nine sheep in the wilderness.'

'Ay ! fat o't ?'

'Shepherdin' maun hae been gey different in thae days.'

'Yes?'

'I've often thoucht that the man that gaed efter the yae lost sheep, maun hae haen a fine dowg tae get back the sheep tae the flock efter he'd fand him. An' then the wilderness, I tak' it, that jist meant the hill-side?'

'Oh, no doubt.'

'Humph! What sort o' a scatter wad he find fin he cam' back for the ninety-and-nine, eh?'

Doctor Guthrie used to tell a story of a hypochondriac minister, who became a perfect nuisance to his brethren by perpetually wailing and moaning about his approaching demise. Stirling happened to be his native town, and he was always talking about going home to die. At length it so happened that he had occasion to visit the ancient city of his birth, and having made a good breakfast, he proceeded to call on a clerical brother—an old friend, who knew his weakness well. From pure custom the hypochondriac took up his usual plaint, and began to expatiate on his ailments till he fairly 'scunnert' his patient auditor. 'Ah!' he querulously piped, 'you know what a sufferer I am. You know I am dying. I have just come to Stirling to lay down my bones.' The other's patience being fairly exhausted, he snapped out:—

'Oh man! you're in a frien's hoose; jist use yer liberty!. Dee an' be dune wi't!'

CHAPTER IV

The Glen School—The Prevalent Kindly Spirit—Farmhouse Life—Character gauged from a Gastronomic Standpoint—A stingy Mistress—Jock an' the Cheese—Two Parritch Stories—Outspokenness: Instances—An Interrupted Grace—Jeems Wricht pronounces Doom on Buonaparte—The Minister truly a Representative of the People—Value of Education—A Succession of Clerics—My Father and Uncle: their Boyhood and College Days—Parental Self-Denial—A College Challenge—A Fight and a Duel—A Brawl at Ballater—The Character of the old Manse and old Minister—An Instance of his Quaint Humour—His Death.

In the farmhouses in our glen the very kindliest relations existed, as a rule, between master and man and mistress and maid. My uncle David was for many years, almost a long lifetime in fact, tenant of one of the largest sheep farms at that time in the Grampians. The farm went by the name of 'The Baillies' (locally 'da Bylies'), and he also rented the extensive pastures of Gleneffock, Glencatt, Glenmark, and other glens. He was possessed of quite an uncommon fund of energy and great public spirit. After the Disruption he started, at his own expense, a school for the use of his own large family, and I well remember when, as a young

divinity student, the Rev. George Grimm, M.A., had charge of the little heather-theekit building. Mr. Grimm is now one of the most scholarly ministers of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales, was lately Moderator to the General Assembly of that great colony, and he is an author of no mean repute. His sphere of labour then, however, was homely enough in all conscience. It was simply a rough whinstane cot, thatched, as I have said, with heather—altogether most unpretentious; but good, solid, educative work was done there. During the winter months great hulking young shepherds often came to acquire the rudiments of a plain education, though rather late in life for most of them.

Quite a kindly communal spirit reigned in the Glen. Very rarely, in ordinary farmhouses, was any difference made between the kitchen and the parlour, so far as diet was concerned. The children of the household most frequently supped their parritch from the same parritch-pot as the shepherd loons and servant lassies. The fare, though rough and homely, was plentiful, and in the long winter forenichts the spacious kitchen with its flagged floor and wide hearth, in which a glowing peat fire brightly burned, was the scene of much kindly social life and rural domestic industry. The rafters, fast turning black with peat-reek, were hung with hams, sides of bacon, onions, fishing-rods, guns, salmon-spears, and all the nondescript implements of industry or sport. Here on the shelves might be seen a goodly row of cheeses; in one corner potatoes lay heaped up; in another a stack of peats which reached nearly to the ceiling. One end of the

apartment was occupied with box-beds for the lassies, which during the day were shut off, like cabins in a ship, with their sliding wooden doors. The steam from countless homespun garments, wet with snow, mingled with the peat-reek, and filled the kitchen with a misty atmosphere, in which the dim diffused light from home-made tallow candle or pendent oil 'crusie' glimmered faintly and fitfully, like a Will-o'-the-wisp in the marshes and bogs outside. The dogs lay extended in every attitude on the uneven floor, and the hum of animated conversation mingled with the ceaseless whirr of the spinning-wheel. Sometimes the drone and skirl of bagpipe and chanter, or occasionally the merry strain raised by some wandering fiddler, set lads and lassies dancing strathspey and reel, till the whole house would shake, as if sharing in the unrestrained merriment of the hearty, kindly, unsophisticated inmates.

Each farm had a character of its own, which was generally gauged by the servants from a gastronomic standpoint. Some mistresses had a bad character if they stinted the table supplies; while others, again, though perhaps comparatively contemptible from a high ethical point of view, were credited with all the virtues if they were not too particular in taking every atom of cream from the milk, for instance, or if they were occasionally lavish in their commissariat arrangements.

The following anecdote of one good wife of a niggardly disposition may serve to illustrate this trait. It is a good stock bothy story:—

'Come in tae yer parritch, Jock,' she cried to the herd boy; 'the flees are droonin' i' yer milk!' 'Humph,'

said Jock, *sotto voce*, 'there's nae eneuch o't tae droon a flee.' 'Fat's that ye say, ye impidint baggitch?' retorted the sharp-eared and irascible house-mistress. 'Dae ye mean tae say ye hinna eneuch milk?' 'Oo ay!' again growled Jock, 'I daur say there's plenty for the parritch!'

'Flees' in the Mearns, I may explain, are flies; and fleas are known as 'flechs.'

The next episode, we will assume, refers to the same Jock, who had evidently changed his quarters at the term day. The new mistress was the direct antithesis of the former cheese-paring individual. At all events, the rations in Jock's new quarters were not 'set out by measure,' as they had been under the former régime. To his pleased astonishment, on being summoned to his first meal in his new abode, he beheld a huge platter of bannocks, with a great gaucie cheese and an enormous bowl of fine rich milk set down on the table for his delectation. Judging his present circumstances from his former experiences, we may pardon Jock for thinking that this was his daily allowance; and, being pretty sharp set, he at once made a silent but vigorous attack on the provender.

He made a valorous attempt to dispose of the huge allowance in front of him. Time sped on, and still his jaws continued to work, until at length the farmer, wondering what was keeping the new man so long, came in to see if anything had gone amiss. He good-humouredly addressed Jock, saying: 'Bless me, laddie, are ye gaen tae eat a' day?' to which Jock responded with heartfelt earnestness: 'Dod, maister, dae ye think a chield can feenish a cheese like this i' sic a hurry?'

Another whimsical anecdote, relating to the same old homely custom, is told of a farmer and his man who used to eat out of the same dish of brose. The young wife, however, used slily to put an allowance of cream to the side of the dish from which the goodman was wont to sup; and as he sat on one side of the table and his man sat on the other, the old fellow had no difficulty in securing to himself the coveted luxury. One day, by some mischance, the cream side had been set down opposite Jock the 'plooman,' and the old farmer was a little perplexed how to remedy the mistake without too plainly betraying his selfish design to the presumably unsuspecting man. Jock, however, was not so stupid as he perhaps looked. The farmer, catching the great bowl by the rim, and giving it a swinging twist, which brought the cream side right under his chin, said, in a studiously off-hand sort of way: 'Ay, Jock, that bowl cost me a groat.' Jock, seeing through the trick at a glance, put his brawny fists on the dish, and, reversing the process, brought back the cream to his side of the table, saying: 'Weel awat, sir, it wisna dear at the price'; and then plunging in his horn spoon, he made short work of both the cream and the farmer's selfish designs—at all events for that occasion.

Talking of 'parritch' brings up another old-servant story. A faithful housekeeper of the old school had occasion to call her master one day while visitors were in the house with him. She, in her usual peremptory fashion, poked her head in at the door, and asked him to 'come butt the hoose, as his parritch was ready.' When the visitors had left, the old bachelor kindly told

Janet not to be so blunt when strange people were about, but if ever she had occasion again to make the same announcement, she need not blurt out the bare naked truth, but just employ a little polite fiction, and 'instead of saying "parritch," she might just say that a "*gentleman*" wanted to see him.' So she did, most literally, very shortly afterwards, when a similar occasion had arrived; but as the laird still kept talking to his visitors, and took no notice of Janet's announcement, the old woman came back again in a great state of flustration, saying: 'Come awa' ben, sir, this meenit, or the "*gentleman*" 'll be stane cauld.'

One great characteristic of the Glen people was their direct outspokenness. This must not be confounded with rudeness. It simply arose from the frank independence of character which led every man to respect his own position and opinions, as he was really under no obligation to any one, except the universally recognised compulsion 'to render honour where honour was due.' In sober truth, the generality of those fine, sturdy, independent old farmers (with no doubt many faults of temper, and a little peculiarity of manner) still very nearly lived up to the grand old scriptural standard, to 'honour all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honour the king.' They had a directness of speech which would be refreshing in these days, when there is so much sycophantic mealymouthedness. For instance, Lady Gladstone one day asked old Mr. Jolly of Micklestrath, who had been asked to join the laird at dinner after paying his rent, 'Mr. Jolly, can I have a glass of wine with you?' 'Na, I thank ye, ma leddy, I winna tak' it, for I dinna like it.' Then there

was the old Scottish minister who, owing to his failing powers, had often to avail himself of the services of young probationers. One day a rather conceited young man, who imagined himself gifted with extraordinary oratorical powers, had preached for the old man, and on descending from the pulpit was met by the minister with extended hands. Anticipating high praise, he affectedly said: 'No compliments, I pray.' 'Na, na!' said the old man; 'nooadays, man, I'm gled o' onybody.'

It might have been the same young gentleman who got a rebuff from an old beadle in this way. He had rather conceitedly said to the old man, 'I don't think I need put on the gown, John. It is only an incumbrance, though some folks seem to think it makes the preacher more impressive.' To which the beadle, having a less exalted opinion of the young man's powers, said: 'Ay, sir, that's jist it, sir; it makes ye mair impressive, and—ye need it a', sir; ay, ye need it a', sir.'

Speaking of the custom of eating from the same pot or dish, I am reminded of another anecdote. One of the old 'wrichts' in the Glen had several apprentices, and when business was brisk there would be even a few journeymen 'hands.' It was the old man's custom always to ask a blessing at the beginning of each meal, and this he did with closed eyes, and at considerable length. The hungry hands from the shop chafed not a little under this infliction, as they were pleased to consider it; and not unfrequently, with much irreverence, they began operations while the good man was hardly half-way through the grace. He often found

half the pot cleared before he was able to get begun on the viands; and his wife Janet would not hand him his long 'horn spune' till he had said grace. One day there was a fine dish of 'stoved taties' for dinner. The old man was hungry—his teeth fairly watered. He knew the lads would take an unfair advantage, and have 'the stovies' half finished before he had a chance to start. So he scandalised his pious guidwife by hurriedly gabbling: 'Lord bless this food—Jenny, rax me that spune—an' a' praise an' glory shall be Thine. Amen. Sup fair, billies.'

Nor was the kindly feeling confined to farmers and their men; it was just the same between laird and tenant. An amusing instance of the homely simplicity of character of some of these worthy farmers was given me by my dear friend Grigor Taylor. He told it me thus:

During the height of the Napoleonic scare Sir Archibald Grant, Laird of Monymusk, had called his tenantry together to devise means to repel the threatened invasion. Wishing to test the spirit of his followers, he asked: 'How far will you be prepared to go, you Monymusk men, to assist me to repel the invader?' There was silence for some minutes. Then a gaunt form uprose. It was Jeems Wricht, one of the oldest residents on the estate. With great deliberation, but with exceeding emphasis, he said: 'To the vera waas o' Pairis, Sir Archibald!' Sir Archibald had only meant how far they would go with funds, men, and munitions; and after this was explained and settled, a sort of general council of war was held, and pros and cons fully discussed. The general opinion

seemed to be that as 'Boney' was sure to discomfit the 'Buchan bodies' on the coast, he would be certain to win his way to such an important position as Monymusk. Here he would be met by the doughty fencibles, now in council assembled, and of course it was looked on as a certainty that that would terminate his career, as he would be sure to be captured. Then came the all-important question, What should be done with him after they had captured him?

Now there was an outlying common, a sort of no-man's-land, on the estate, called Bog Raxie — a sour, uninviting, solitary spot, where tinkers and poachers, and 'orra folk' generally, found it convenient to camp when hunted off from more civilised places.

So again the gaunt form of Jeems Wricht arose; and he, as common spokesman, delivered himself of the doom of the mighty Napoleon; and thus he spoke:

'Pit him till Bog Raxie to pu' hedder for the remainder o' his life, the dagoned smatchet!'

The idea of 'the Scourge of Europe' being sent to pull heather as a fitting punishment for his long career of conquest is tolerably ludicrous.

In our glen, however, at the time of which I am speaking, there were numberless duplications of Jeems Wricht. Quiet, earnest, unimaginative men for the most part, not very refined in speech or manner, but with a certain persistent belief in themselves, a sincere pride in their own local doings, which, though narrow and provincial from the modern point of view, led to many fine exhibitions of kindly co-

operation and mutual helpfulness. Especially were they proud of 'their ain minister' if he was at all a capable and whole-souled man.

In most of the Scottish manses of the time the minister was really and truly the trusted representative of the people. He was thoroughly in touch with all their wants and aspirations. Marriages were mostly performed at the manse ; the minister presided over the christenings, and did the last solemn services for the dead, and was intimately bound up with every phase of the daily life of the people. In fact, no more democratic environment could well have been found than that about the ordinary Scottish manse. In all the long fights against feudal privilege and class tyranny, to their honour be it said, the Scottish ministers, as a rule, took a noble stand on the side of popular rights, and thus became endeared to the peasantry among whom they laboured. My grandfather was undoubtedly a typical specimen of what one writer has called 'the farmer cleric,' and perhaps in no other country in the world can we find any type of professional character completely to correspond with this. With all the education of a thorough scholar, and with the instincts of a gentleman, he was yet absolutely in touch with the daily life of the people, and used to share their labours, and identify himself with all the little tragedies and comedies of their humble history.

Knowing from their own experience the value of a good education, the old Scottish ministers were alert to seize the advantages which the patriotism and foresight of the Scottish people had put in the way

of all who wished to procure a sound education for their children. Whole volumes might be written of the wondrous self-denial and the pathetic sacrifices made by parents in straitened circumstances to secure the blessings of a good education for those who were to succeed them.

My father, the Rev. Robert Inglis, M.A., who succeeded my grandfather on his death as minister of Lochlee, was the second son, and was born at Glamis, where, I understand, his grandfather, that is, my great-grandfather, officiated in the double capacity of minister and schoolmaster. If family tradition be correct, his father was also a cleric, so that I can claim to be essentially 'the son of a Levite.'

My uncle David, the eldest son, was a high-spirited young fellow in those early days, and he and my father attended classes at Marischal College, Aberdeen, where many another son of the manse was sent up to take his degree. The two lads, as may be imagined, being freed from the restraints of home, and cast among hundreds of students of their own age, were guilty of many pranks such as are usually associated with students of all times; but they must have made good use of their opportunities, as my father took his degree with distinction, and Uncle David, though not taking any degree in medicine, yet acquired such a practical knowledge of the profession as made him down to his life's end a valued, much beloved, and indeed successful doctor in the Glen, amid the beautiful surroundings of which he lived and died, as the tenant of one of the largest sheep-farms on the Panmure Estates. He was in fact the only practitioner in the

district, although he never made any charge for his services.

The two lads had to trudge 'amang the heather' many a weary mile across to Deeside, through the Forest of Birse, thence *via* Ballater, Aboyne, and Banchory, to get to 'the Granite City'; and though they 'cultivated the humanities on a little oatmeal,' their scanty fare was eked out by an occasional present of homely delicacies from the old Lochlee Manse. But no doubt the thought of the self-denial being practised at home for their sakes would act as an incentive to them. As a matter of fact, the whole history of the Scottish race shows what sterling good men these old universities have turned out; and who can doubt that this is in large measure due to the deep sentiments of love and gratitude evoked, and to the noble aspirations fostered, by the parental self-denial practised under many a lowly roof?

My father was a man of grand physique; standing fully six feet in his stockings, with strength and courage proportionate to his bulk. He was an adept at all the manly sports and exercises of the time, and though wonderfully good-tempered, he could assert himself if his good nature was too much imposed upon. One of his class-mates, the Rev. James Coutts of Newcastle, New South Wales, with whom in after-life I had many a pleasant evening's chat, told me that on one occasion a great bully had been taking advantage of my uncle David's lesser bulk and more slender physique to put some indignity upon him. My father at once took up the quarrel, and wished

to inflict signal punishment upon the bully,—as he was well able to do,—but, said Mr. Coutts, 'Your uncle David would have none of this, but determined to fight the man himself; and so a regular challenge was sent, a day appointed, seconds nominated,—of whom I was one,—and in the meantime your uncle went into regular training. He got your father and myself' (and Mr. Coutts must have been a fine brawny man in those days) 'to stand up to him in our room and pummel him all over as hard as we could pelt, he noting where the blows told most, and he soon found that just under the breast in the region of the heart was the sorest place we could hit him; so when the eventful day arrived, he aimed his blows solidly and doggedly at that particular spot, never caring where his burly antagonist hit him, with the result that, in two or three rounds, the vaunting Goliath was thoroughly knocked out of time by this modern pocket edition of David.'

Another of Mr. Coutts' favourite anecdotes was the record of a duel fought by my father with some lordling or other who had insulted him; but the proceedings terminated somewhat in the manner of Captain Marryat's famous duel recorded in *Peter Simple*, as the bullets were carefully *not* put into the pistols by the seconds. It may show something of the affection in which my father was held by his class-mates, when I state that the old gentleman always added, when telling me the story, that he himself lay in wait in a ditch close by, with a loaded gun, determined to shoot my father's antagonist if any injury had been inflicted upon my father.

On one of their annual journeys to join the classes they happened to reach Ballater during the annual fair,—or 'feeing market,' as it is called; and there is an old 'body' in the village of Edzell, now or at least lately still alive, a Mrs. Copeland, who yet tells the tale of the 'ploy' in which the young fellows found themselves entangled. It seems that my uncle David, always being up to tricks and practical jokes, had got into some trouble with several irascible Highlanders, who did not appreciate his high spirits. Being a little fellow, they at length turned on him very angrily, and were about to inflict condign punishment upon him, when my father ran at once to the rescue. But I may let Mrs. Copeland tell the rest:

'My mon, Jeems Copeland (and a fine stalwart mon was he), stood by wi' yer faither, shoother to shoother. Yer uncle had been knockit doon wi' a clure in his heid. My mon Jeems and yer faither bestrode him, and challenged the best men in a' the market to stand up to them, but not one would face them'; and then, in accents of intense feeling, the old dame would say, 'I assure ye, he wis a grand mon yer faither, there wisna his marrows[1] i' the Glen.'

I have already alluded to my grandfather's hospitality: indeed his open-handedness to strangers often put his own home circle on short commons, and one can easily imagine how anxious the old couple would often be as they thought of the future of their own large family of girls and boys. The Manse girls, as they were called, were noted far and wide

[1] *Marrows*, equal.

for their good looks and pleasant manners, and were eventually all well married, with one exception—my dear Auntie Jeannie, who remained single. But it was not to be expected that, with the poor stipend of a rural clergyman in those days, my grandfather could give much of a 'tocher' to any of them. However, he managed to give them all a good education, including the accomplishments then in vogue; and the Manse of Lochlee is to this day spoken of by many a guest of these far-off days as having been one of the most delightful resorts for a country visit that could possibly be conceived. Indeed I have met people in all parts of the world who to this day speak with deep feeling of the kindness they experienced there when they were young and happened to visit the Glen.

Much of my father's love of fun and his quaint humour must have been transmitted from the old Lochlee minister; and the sturdy independence of his character and his genuine unobtrusive piety were no doubt part of the same inheritance.

When on his death-bed, my grandfather was much concerned about the future prospects of his numerous family. He had always fully lived up to the limits of his small income, and at times, when he was weighed down with bodily infirmity, his spirits became depressed. My old granny, with beautiful optimism, sought to cheer him up, but he would often revert to the gloomy outlook for his children in the unknown future.

In one of these fits of depression, my grandmother ventured to remind him of a verse of the Psalmist,

that 'he had never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread'; and then she repeated the verse which closes with 'Bread shall be given him, his water shall be sure,' to which the old man responded, with a gleam of his wonted humour, 'Ou ay, guidwife, I was never muckle feared aboot the watter!' This was in allusion to the situation of the Manse, which was almost hemmed in on every side by burns and rivulets, with the loch stretching away in silver radiance almost from the very door,—and, seeing that several times a year the glebe-lands were inundated with mountain floods, this reply was happy enough.

In 1837 the old minister died, full of years and honours; and to this day his memory is kept in grateful remembrance by the dwellers in the Glen, where he had lived a noble, useful, honourable life, and had been for over thirty years a faithful minister of the Gospel.

CHAPTER V

The Disruption of 1843—My Father's Disposition—His Share in the Fight—His Memorials of the Disruption—His Translation to Edzell in 1841—Great Increase of Congregation—Progress of the Controversy—Lord Panmure and Fox Maule—My Father's Estimate of Panmure's Character—'Persecutions for Conscience' Sake'—A Sore Bereavement—His last Sermon in the Parish Kirk—A noble Record 'for Conscience' Sake'—Old Dr. Grant's Story of 'the Flesh Pots'—The first Free Church Sermon—The Tent in the Wilderness—Increasing Hardships and Difficulties—Fidelity of the Flock—Humour under Privations—Preaching under Difficulties—Hostile Attitude of Opponents—Progress of the Struggle—Once more in a house of his own.

On the death of my grandfather, my father became the minister at Lochlee, where he had for some time held office as parish schoolmaster; and for four years he ministered with much acceptance to the kindly Glen folk, who held his name in honour and his person in loving esteem. The fierce controversy as to 'patronage,' the power of the several law-courts in ecclesiastical matters, and other keen differences of opinion in regard to Church polity, was then being waged with all the ardour of the perfervid Scottish temperament.

Not even the most secluded parish could remain

free from the intellectual strife which raged around; and my father, with his bluff, outspoken honesty of purpose and clear conscientious convictions, could not remain a callous or disinterested spectator or actor at such a time. Although a man of the kindliest temper, he exhibited a dogged persistency of purpose and an almost audacious pugnacity when his fighting instincts were roused; and he threw himself with intense intellectual enjoyment into the polemics of the time, which culminated—as every student of modern Scottish history well knows—in the great Disruption movement of 1843. His was such a love-inspiring personality, and he had such a frank, breezy, healthy sense of humour, that he could not fail to make the impress of his individuality felt at a time, when to be frank and outspoken was looked upon by one party as a crime, and by the other as a supreme virtue. So it was, that with his generous instincts for liberty, his warm sympathy for liberalism in politics, and all his deep convictions of the value of freedom in thought and action, my father could not fail to be found on the side of those who were fighting the popular battle against exclusive privilege and restriction of the people's rights. As he took a very active part in 'the ten years' conflict,' he became a marked man among the many noble examples of those 'who suffered for conscience' sake'; and I think it only fair to his memory, and merely doing bare justice to his own sense of what his conscience demanded from him at that time, that I should allow him, as far as may be, to speak for himself.

In 1872, long after the hurly-burly of the controversy had in some measure subsided, my father published a few copies of what he called *Memorials of the Disruption in Edzell and Lochlee.* In his prefatory note he says these were intended for a few of his friends, but chiefly 'For the members of my own family who are scattered abroad, that my sons may know what their father had to do and suffer for conscience' sake'; and, with characteristic independence, to these notes he added: 'I do not approve of the practice of using initials, and not writing names in full, in memorials of this kind. I presume that those whose names are mentioned said and did what is attributed to them most conscientiously, and not maliciously, though, of course, I think, erroneously.

'Most of them are now dead; and justice demands a statement which I am most happy to make, that, while some of them seem to have regretted the way in which they acted at, and after, the Disruption, not one of them, I have every reason to believe, cherished the least ill-will or animosity towards me; but, on the contrary, between me and many of them, so long as they lived, friendly and neighbourly offices were freely interchanged. It may be alleged that I was not always so yielding and conciliatory as I might have been. I can only say that I then thought, and think still, I frequently met with hard usage from those who ought to have acted otherwise than they did, and that I always had a free conscience in regard to the treatment I gave to them. I considered myself a free man, and would not be brought into bondage, nor submit to the dictation of those who tried to usurp authority over me.'

On the unanimous call of the congregation at Edzell, I find then, from my father's narrative, that he was translated from Lochlee, to be assistant and successor to Mr. Hutton at Edzell, on the 20th October 1841. It will be seen that this was only two years before the Disruption, and one can easily imagine the seething intellectual ferment that must have been moving in the minds of all the thoughtful 'Men of the Mearns' at that time. Mr. Hutton had been for a considerable time unable to preach regularly, and the attendance at the church had fallen off. 'After my admission,' says my father, 'it began to increase, and continued to increase till the Disruption. This was sufficiently indicated by the amount of the collections for the poor being fully £20 more that year I was minister than they had been before. Besides, all the ministers in the neighbouring parishes belonged to the Moderate party in the Church, and not a few from these parishes became my regular hearers; this was particularly the case in regard to Stracathro and Fettercairn.'

As many as twenty to thirty worshippers used to come every Sabbath day from Fettercairn, some five and a half miles, to hear my father preach at Edzell. The aged minister, Mr. Hutton, died on the 5th June 1842, and 'at the Communion at Edzell on the second Sabbath of July following, there was scarcely standing-room in the church.' 'There were one hundred more communicants than there ever had been before, so that there had to be six table services, instead of four or five. Two of these were served by me,' writes my father, 'two by Mr. Henry Brewster of

Farnell, and two by Mr. M'Cosh, now Dr. M'Cosh, from Brechin.'

I may mention that at the date of this present writing (July 1893) the venerable and learned Dr. M'Cosh is still alive, and has long been filling a position of great eminence, dignity, and usefulness as the senior professor in Princeton University in the United States of America.

My father's pamphlet goes on to detail at length the progress of the great controversy, and the active part taken in it by himself and his attached and constantly-increasing congregation. 'While a few,' he says, 'were evidently cherishing the hope that the Church would be ignominiously driven from her position by the Court of Session, the great majority of those who attended upon my ministry here, and who had attended upon the ministry of my father and myself in Lochlee, had evidently made up their minds to endure any hardships and any persecution rather than abandon their principles.'

It was not long ere their powers of endurance were rudely tested, and right noble was the response. Old William Maule, the then Lord Panmure, was embittered against his son and heir, Mr. Fox Maule, who afterwards succeeded to the title. Fox Maule, more perhaps to vex his father at first than from real conviction, I have heard it said, espoused the Free Church side of the great controversy, and this naturally roused the old laird's animus still more against the Evangelical party.

Though my father was a sufferer from his unscrupulous use of power, he sums up his character I

think with most commendable fairness, and even with generosity. He says:

'Lord Panmure had been kind to me after the death of my father; but not more so than I believe he was to all the ministers connected with his property. I had found him always very accessible, and ready to do anything that I suggested for the good of his tenants or others, both in Lochlee and Edzell. I had got considerable sums of money from him at different times to help deserving widows and others in their difficulties. My own impression of him was that, if he had been under better management in his youth and during all his lifetime, he would have been, as a worldly man, one of the best, if not the very best, and most exemplary of our Scottish lords and lairds. He had naturally a great deal of *hauteur*, and a proud, bad, ungovernable temper, but could do, and did do, many noble and generous actions. He always respected clergymen when their conduct was consistent with their profession. I happened to dine at Brechin Castle soon after the wreck of the *Forfarshire* on the Farne Islands. The conduct of Grace Darling was the subject of conversation, when, with a glow of enthusiasm that I certainly did not expect, overspreading his fine features, he said—"I had rather be Grace Darling than the Duke of Wellington."'

Be that as it may, however, every legal and other device that could be put into operation against my good father and his faithful adherents was resorted to. Some of the farmers were threatened with evictions, and were subjected to incalculable expense and annoyance in defence of their rights. My father was involved

in tedious, vexatious, and almost ruinous law proceedings. Panmure and his satellites tried all they knew to break his spirit and tame him into submission; but he was too brave and honest and conscientious either to be bullied or bribed into doing despite to his own earnest convictions of what was right.

Early in 1843 the saddest experience of all that troublous time fell on the loving heart of the valiant but sorely-tried minister. He briefly, but pathetically, alludes to it in these words:—'Scarlet fever of a most fatal and virulent kind broke out in the village and neighbourhood; a great number of young people died of it; and many families were clad in mourning. Three of my children died in less than three weeks. The oldest, a very interesting boy, seven years of age, took a deep, and, for his age, a very intelligent interest in the contendings of the Church, and frequently asked during winter, "Papa, where will we go when we leave the manse?" When the time for leaving the manse came, "he was not, for God had taken him."'

After the ever-memorable proceedings in the Tanfield Hall at Edinburgh, at which my father was personally present, he came home, as he says, 'to preach my last sermon in the Parish Church on Sabbath 28th May. Before dismissing the congregation I told them,' following his own narrative, 'that I had now ceased to be a minister of the Established Church, and would not preach there again; that I had joined the Free Protesting Church of Scotland, and, God willing, would preach the next Sabbath at the manse door to as many as might choose to continue under my ministry; and desiring those who were not to remain in connection

with the Established Church, to lift their Bibles, and take them away. Very few Bibles were left—only fifteen, I was told by the kirk-officer who joined the Free Church; and when some seemed to hesitate whether they should take or leave them, others in various parts of the church were distinctly heard to say: "Tak' your Bible, an' come awa'." There was no lingering about the doors, no apparent regret at what had happened. The few who were residuary seemed rather to be pleased that we *had* left—the many, that they were free.'

Surely it is a sad, yet a noble and inspiring memory. What heart-breakings and deep emotions were being stirred in every parish in Scotland in those memorable days. What leave-takings from homes hallowed by a thousand tender and fond associations! What noble sacrifices! What splendid testimony to the power of principle and the sacred demands of conscience!

I have heard the Disruption movement criticised in various fashions; sneered at, decried, denounced outright, or 'damned with faint praise.' To me, the record of my dear father's noble stand, and his sufferings and privations 'for conscience' sake' are part of the priceless heritage he left me; and keep his memory ever sacred, stirring my deepest emotions, when I think of what he did and suffered for what some call '*an idea.*'

The spirit in which some ignoble natures judged the movement at the time is well exemplified in the following anecdote told me, at the far Antipodes, nearly half a century after the event, by one of the dauntless

heroes of the movement, the venerable and beloved minister of Shoalhaven in New South Wales—Dr. Grant. He is still alive, a vigorous and lovable octogenarian, and able to take a keen interest in every good work in his large district, where he reigns supreme in the affections of all classes.

At the Disruption, Dr. Grant was ministering in a small secluded Highland parish, but he threw himself heart and soul, with all the fine enthusiasm of his nature, into the Free Church movement. Just then a subtle temptation came to him in the shape of an invitation to accept a very desirable living in a fine, settled parish in the Lowlands. The young minister was a struggling man. Ease and competence and settled comfort were offered on the one hand, with every prospect of a long career of usefulness, if he would only swallow his convictions, put a muffle on his conscience, and stop his ears to its 'still small voice.' To his eternal honour be it said, he did as many another loyal, true-hearted soul then did—he remained true to conscience: and without one qualm or regret or afterthought, he 'went out' in the perfect faith of the ancient patriarch, with an absolute trust in his Master, and, 'not knowing whither he went,' or what the future might have in store for him.

To him one day came a Moderate minister who had elected to remain by 'the flesh pots.' He had heard of the fine offer that had been made to Mr. Grant, and came to unctuously congratulate his fortunate young acquaintance. To his utter astonishment, he heard from Mr. Grant's own lips, that he had refused the tempting offer for pure conscience' sake. The bovine

nature of the man betrayed itself at once, as he said : 'Ye fool ! an' I've seen twenty fat cows in that manse-yaird.'

Of course it would be unjust to say that all the ministers that elected to remain in the Establishment were of this gross worldly type ; but beyond a doubt the finer spirits and nobler natures were numbered among those that 'came out and were separate.'

To return to my dear father's narrative. 'On Sabbath, the 14th June,' he says—'I preached at the manse door from Titus ii. 13, 14—"Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Frail and infirm persons were taken into the rooms and passages of the manse, so as they could hear, and a large congregation were seated upon hastily-made forms, and upon the grass at the door. I went into a private room some time before the hour of worship, and my feelings were indescribable. I remember, as the hour drew very near, that I was almost despairing of any one coming, when, just as the clock warned to strike, I heard the patter of a single coin fall into the plate, which was near the window where I sat. I was in such a state of agitation that I could not look up to see who it was that put it in. Immediately there was the patter of another, then a continual patter, patter, pattering, till I went out and stood at the table on which the Bible and Psalm Book had been placed. I did not miss many of the familiar faces that I had been accustomed to see in the church ; but how differ-

ent the surroundings!—the beautiful grass on which many of the congregation were reclining, and the green hedge bounding the little lawn, the full-leaved trees skirting one side, the everlasting mountains in Lethnot and Lochlee and the upper part of Edzell, towering in the distance, and the bright midsummer sun shining down upon us in all his glory. This was the only difficulty, which I provided against on future Sabbaths by driving a pole into the ground, tying an outspread umbrella upon the top of it, and moving round so as to keep it between me and the sun. That sermon was not preached in vain. Many took notice of it, and even spoke unto their dying day of the benefit they had received from it. One old man, David Henderson, whom I did not then know personally, though I knew him well by sight as a remarkably attentive hearer from Fettercairn Parish, and whom I frequently visited afterwards, and waited upon in his last illness, came to me when the congregation was dismissed, took hold of my hand, and said with deep feeling, that brought tears into my eyes, "Mr Inglis, I have heard you preach many a good sermon before, but I never heard you preach one like that." I looked upon this as a reward for all the sacrifices I had made and was making. I preached the two following Sabbaths at the manse door to increasing audiences, the weather continuing so propitious that every person was taking notice of it. I had arranged to leave the manse as soon as possible, and when I left, the manse door could no longer be the place of meeting for the congregation. Accordingly, arrangements were made for erecting a tent on a piece of the barren ground that I rented, and only about one

hundred yards west from the Parish Church.' The tent was erected. My brother Robert was born just about then, and he and I were baptized in that tent. Then came hardships and difficulties innumerable about getting a shelter for himself and family. Boycotting is not such a modern engine of the persecutor and oppressor as is popularly supposed. A ban was put on all who dared to show sympathy with the brave, uncomplaining, whole-souled minister, who chose 'to obey God rather than man.' Maledictions were hurled at his head by so-called men of rank and culture ; but the loyal flock were equal to every demand on their fidelity, and when the brave protester was well-nigh exhausted in the struggle against 'the powers in high places,' his noble, courageous wife and sympathetic adherents cheered him on to fresh resistance till in the end he triumphed, and his opponents, from very shame, were forced to confess that they could not say one word against him. My father's characteristic humour breaks out even in these troubled times. He narrates that 'the rooms that we occupied would only hold a very small part of my furniture, and the bulkiest and best of it was sent to friends' houses in the neighbourhood. It thus happened to be in three different parishes and two different counties. I used to joke a good deal about this, and speak of my town and two country residences, in the one of which I could sit upon my own chairs and in the other stretch my legs under my own mahogany.'

What a great heart the fine high-spirited gentleman must have had to have thus joked under such troubles and privations !

The narrative thus continues :—'On the 25th June I

preached for the first time in what we called the Tent. It was only about half covered with drugget, and during the service a gale of wind rose, which shook the framework so much that the congregation were greatly alarmed. The gale increased in the afternoon and during the night, but the tent stood till between five and six o'clock on Monday morning, when a heavy blast levelled it with the ground. Two men in the village—old David Dundas, who had joined the Free Church, and William Cooper, who continued in the Establishment—were at their doors and looking at the tent. William, the Establishment man, said: "David, I have aye been tellin' ye that ye're a' wrang; ye see the deevil has blawn doun your kirk, but he hasna touched oors." David, the Free Churchman, replied: "He's no needin'; he got quiet possession o' yours at the last General Assembly." Dr. Chalmers was very much amused with this anecdote when I told him a few weeks afterwards at Monboddo. I may here relate another anecdote, as the conversation took place about this time. James Moir, at Inchbare, a blacksmith, who afterwards was elected a deacon of the congregation, was talking in his smithy with some persons who had not left the Established Church. They, thinking to annoy James, said to him: "Oh! ye're a' just like Lot's wife—ye're lookin' back again to Sodom." James very unexpectedly turned the laugh against themselves by saying: "No doubt it was ill wi' her for looking back; but it was as ill, if no waur, wi' them that didna come out ava'."' After a protracted delay a site for a church was obtained on a feu belonging to Mr Carr, shoemaker, and my father refers to its erection as fol-

lows :—'The walls of the church were rapidly got up, and I preached for the first time within them on the 17th December, only half of the roof being on and none of the windows put in. The people sat on boards and benches in different parts of the area, as they could find shelter. Stormy weather set in, and we continued for weeks to meet in the church without windows, the minister moving about from place to place between the windows for shelter, according to the direction from which the wind was blowing. A formal opening was made on the 25th February 1844. There was a very severe storm and great drift, so that the more distant members of the congregation could not attend ; there was even difficulty to many in getting through an immense wreath of snow which blocked up the door. Yet the collection amounted to £38, 1s. 4d.'

It is difficult for those of the present generation to realise the bitterness that existed between the two bodies at the Disruption. Yet some faint idea of it may be gained from what follows :—'It will be seen that no site could be obtained from the proprietor for either church or manse ; and we were willing to let matters remain as they were, for we were asking nothing, expecting nothing, getting nothing, from him. He, however, or perhaps rather his disappointed agents and advisers, had been "nursing their wrath to keep it warm." Accordingly, in due legal time for removal at the Whitsunday term of 1844, and in due legal form, summonses for removal of all Free Church tenants—and even a few others, either to save appearances, or because it was not certainly known by the prosecutors to what Church they belonged—were served. These

summonses, if the terms of them had been complied with or enforced by compulsitors of law, would have occasioned the removal of 257 individuals, or about a fourth part of the whole population of the parish. Perhaps there was no intention of enforcing them; but they were the first steps in a legal process to compel or obtain the removal of those who would not abandon the Free Church. This, I think now, was the end which it was intended by them to accomplish; but which, however, it signally failed to do, as not one of them left the Free Church. Still they occasioned a great deal of annoyance, and even bad feeling on the part of members of the Establishment against the Free Church; they put a stop for a time to all improvements; they were not withdrawn, and much unnecessary expense was occasioned by them in the payment of sheriffs'-officers, messengers, law-agents, etc. The only one that it was attempted to enforce was the one against myself. After the church was erected I had repeatedly said that, if I were paid what are called ameliorations, or the expenses I had laid out in draining, liming, and improving the land, to the amount of nearly £100, I would give it up at once. This the landlord's agents would not consent to do, and my friends strongly advised me to let the case go before the Sheriff, urging that, if I were now to give in, I would not only lose all the money I had laid out in improvements, but it would encourage the continuation of the prosecutions against others, who had not such good defences as my missive lease gave to me. My case, therefore, went into Court, and with the glorious delay and uncertainty of law, dragged along its weary length till the 7th December,

when a final deliverance was given by the Sheriff in my favour, upon all the points that had been raised by the proprietor and his agents. In order, if possible, to frighten me into a submission, I was frequently told that the proprietor was determined to get quit of me, and if the Sheriff decided against him, he would carry the case to the Court of Session; and, if necessary, from that to the House of Lords. It may serve still further to show the determined hostility which was manifested, when I state that no fewer than three interlocutors in my favour had previously been pronounced by the Sheriff upon minor and most trifling points in the process, urged, I do not say by Lord Panmure, but by his agents, evidently with no other intention than to procure delay, and add to the expense of the process, with which they charitably seemed to expect, as I have no doubt they were very desirous, that I should be saddled. By the decision of the Sheriff, however, the greater part of these expenses had to be paid by the proprietor.'

Amid all these troubles, my father found time to vindicate his position by publishing several vigorous pamphlets in answer to some uncharitable attacks; and he faithfully discharged all ministerial and pastoral offices for no less than three separate parishes. In all weathers he moved about, a very pillar of strength and consolation to his flock, and during a sort of epidemic of gastric fever he relates how 'for about six weeks he was prevented from putting off all his clothes, as some of those who were in the fever needed constant attendance, night as well as day.' His health began to give way under the incessant strain arising from

night work, want of proper rest, and anxiety about those who were ill. His lifelong, loyal friend, the Rev. William Nixon of St. John's, Montrose, saw the state he was in, while on a friendly visit, 'and resolved that it should be endured no longer; so that I believe,' says the narrative, 'if better accommodation had not been acquired, he would, with his characteristic energy, have taken the necessary steps for, and insisted upon, my removal to some other place.'

However, after wearying delays, and in spite of hostile schemings and plottings, a site for a dwelling was purchased at a large advance on what was really the intrinsic worth. Again I quote from the pamphlet—

'A cottage was built upon the site immediately. 'About one-half of the cost of the cottage was raised by subscriptions from friends. No subscription was taken from any member of the congregation, though all of them were willing to give, as it was thought better that the full amount of their contributions should be reserved for the erection of a manse, when a site could be obtained. The farmers, however, drove a good deal of the materials. So soon as the cottage was built, and even before the plaster was dry, we removed into it, after being six years and a half in lodgings in William Carr's house. The removal produced a sudden and most salutary effect upon the health of the whole family, and we continued in that cottage till the month of August 1859, when we removed to the manse, only built that year, and not then quite finished. Our accommodation in the cottage was far superior to what we had in our lodgings. It was

far more dry and comfortable than any other house in the village, and its internal arrangements and appearance cannot be better described than in the characteristic and forcible language of an old man, who came to it with a marriage party, to witness the marriage of one of his friends. When the party had left the room after the marriage ceremony, and were putting on their hats in the passage, the old man looked around him to the doors of other two rooms, the kitchen and a pantry, and said to one of his neighbours, "Eh, man, this is a braw laigh gutsy house."'

In this cottage then, most of my younger days were spent; and it was not until 1858, fully fifteen years after the Disruption, and after the masterful, high-handed old laird had died, and been succeeded by his son, Fox Maule, that a proper site was obtained, on which a commodious, convenient manse, with stable, gig-house, and other out-offices, was erected; and so the narrative of my dear father's personal sufferings and privations in connection with the Disruption movement may be said, in one sense at least, to have ended.

CHAPTER VI

Boyish Recollections of the Disruption Sufferings—Our Village—Willie Carr—The 'Feeing' or 'Term' Market: its Sights and Sounds; its Evil Features—The Minister and the Drover—A Forced Declaration—Encounter with 'Dubrach' at Ballater Fair—My Father's Athletic Prowess—Dared by Geordie to 'Haud the Ploo'—The Result—How he cowed the Captain—Instances of his Strength—His Emotional Nature—An Honest Man!

It was not often that my father could be brought to speak of the sufferings he endured during these troublous years. My mother indeed would sometimes inveigh with vehement bitterness against those who, in her quaint vernacular, she would say 'took sides with the Philistines.' But I have many a time and oft heard most graphic accounts from the villagers who were the attached adherents of the 'auld minister,' as they loved to call my father; and from these and other sources I have got a very lively idea of most of the main circumstances of this trying time. In fact, one of my earliest infant recollections, which comes back to me through the dim haze of years as the faintest of shadowy reminiscences, is the noisy, yet measured pat, pat, pat of Willie Carr's industrious

hammer, keeping up its useful clatter on the 'lapstane.' Our rooms were immediately over Willie's shop, with only a thin ceiling intervening, and to this day—by what subtle link of memory I know not—I am strangely moved by the smell of leather, and the homely sounds issuing from the workshop where the 'pawkie souter' plies his hammer on the homely lapstone.

The principal village inn just faced our makeshift dwelling, and visitors were often amused to see the minister's dinner being brought from the humble thatched outhouse some forty or fifty yards away, where it had been prepared and cooked. It was in fact a byre, which had been converted into a kitchen by the faithful and loyal souter, Willie Carr — all honour to his name!

Close by, the village commonage—spoken of by the villagers as the 'Market Muir'—stretched away for nearly half a mile, running down on the one side to the haughs bordering the North Esk, and on the other to the whinny expanse of stony pasture-land, which at the time was deemed almost worthless for cultivation, although rented by my father, who there conducted many valuable experiments in agriculture.

Between the inn and our temporary abode lay the broad main street of the village, and here it was that, two or three times a year, the rural fairs were held which attracted the restless spirits of the county, and which indeed, in those days, were the chief available markets for the exchange of cattle-beasts, and country produce generally. 'Cattle-beasts' was the generic name for all sorts of live stock; and to these fairs great

flocks of sheep, herds of cattle, droves of swine, and long strings of horses, might have been seen converging from all points, in charge of their respective drovers and attendants, for several days before the actual date of the fair. At stated periods too, uncouth hordes of farm labourers found their way to the 'feeing market,' as they called it, to negotiate with a fresh master or mistress, for the hire of their services for the ensuing term.

Hardy, hulking, bothy hands, with heavy hob-nailed boots, corduroy trousers, rough woollen coats, and not unfrequently a rather flash calfskin waistcoat, would perambulate the fair in noisy gangs, or, ranging themselves in line against the long blank northern wall of the inn, wait there for the farmers to enter into negotiations with them. The clamour of confused sounds was perfectly bewildering. The plaintive bleating of sheep in the crowded pens, or where, in still larger numbers, they were kept circling madly round by the eager, barking collie dogs, rose high in the startled air, and formed a dominant note, which was ever and anon broken in upon by the deep, prolonged, bovine bellow from some frightened or angry herd of Highland horned cattle, and at intervals by the shrill note of the neighing horses, the grunting of discontented pigs, and the shouts and oaths of eager buyers or anxious attendants. The shrill exclamations of excited spectators, or the cries of keen pedlars vaunting their wares, mingled in sharp staccato notes with the all-pervading hum of a vast assemblage of busy, agitated, human beings, culminating in a medley of sound such as could be equalled nowhere else in the world but at a 'term market' of the olden time.

Doubtless, these gatherings were in some respects a great convenience, and to a large extent they must in the pre-railway days have been a necessity; but as the scene lingers in my boyish recollection, they had outlived their usefulness, and very often degenerated into an orgie pure and simple, where unbridled passions held full sway, and where many a sad evidence of the depravity of human nature was manifested in its naked ugliness. No doubt it was picturesque to see the lines of snowy tents rising in the early morning on the dewy grass, almost beneath the shadow of the tall steeple of the venerable old parish church. The columns of steam from the bright burnished tin or brass cauldrons, in which great savoury joints and whole hecatombs of cabbages and potatoes were boiled for the refection of the lusty ploughmen and farm labourers, were certainly suggestive of military camp life, as the blue smoke from the fires curled peacefully into the still morning air, before the struggling mass of bewildered animalism had become maddened with thirst, or driven desperate by the shouts of the men and the barking of dogs. The 'sweetie stands,' too, and toy booths, looked very pretty in the morning, in the freshness and glamour of their *bizarre* and meretricious display. The sugar-tablets and long candy-sticks, piles of gingerbread and coloured-paper 'pockies of sweeties,' outrageously 'loud' in their glaring colours; the flaunting ribbands and long streaming, dyed cravats, were of such dazzling hues that one might have been pardoned for thinking that some comet had come in contact with a regiment of rainbows, and the result had been piled up on the 'sweetie stands' at our village

fair. By the afternoon the ugly, repulsive features came more into prominence. The erstwhile glistening boilers were now hideously smeared with scum and grease and smoke. The snowy whiteness of the canvas tents had shared the same fate; for the tents were draggled and defiled. The all-pervading odour of stale tobacco and the dead fumes of sodden whisky seemed to hang about the booths like a subtle opiate. Sounds of quarrelling and drunken revellings, fierce oaths and maudlin cries, penetrated the thick atmosphere, mingling with the depressing din of the weary beasts that all around made plaintive protest against the inhumanity that had kept them foodless and waterless all the long, hot, dusty day.

Women with flushed faces and dishevelled finery waited anxiously about, wondering when their husbands, brothers, sweethearts, or neighbours would think it time to leave 'the market' and take the road home. All the pride of the little purchases made at the 'sweetie stand' had long since faded; and, to tell the honest truth, 'a feeing market' of the olden time, divested of all the glamour of romance and the poetry of kindly national reminiscence, oft-times became simply an ugly, sordid, and in many respects brutal and degrading exhibition of downright savage debauchery and unbridled, lascivious drunkenness.

My father was much in advance of his time in his earnest efforts to cope with the abuses of the market system; and he frequently endeavoured, by preaching at the booths, by organising rational counter-amusements in the shape of pleasant picnic outings to 'the old castle,' or some other celebrated picnic ground in the

vicinity, or by earnest and kindly admonitions to the more turbulent spirits, to lessen the lawlessness and stem the evil practices that formed such prominent features in these periodic gatherings.

On these occasions his splendid physique no doubt stood him in good stead. He was utterly devoid of personal fear, unflinching and determined in the discharge of any duty, and yet withal had such a ready tact and kindly humour that when the scanty police were utterly powerless to quell any chance tumult, a hasty summons has come down for 'the minister'; and he sometimes, single-handed, tackled the most troublesome disturbers of the peace, and has many a time done feats of praiseworthy valour which to this day form the theme of many a racy village tradition. For instance, a story is told of how a truculent blackguard of a drover, named 'Handy Walker,' maddened by drink and evil passions, was on one occasion regularly 'running a muck' through the fair. He was a great powerful bully of a man, with a dangerous iron hook inserted in an artificial socket, in place of one hand, which he had lost by some mischance. Being a powerful and expert fighting man, he was accustomed to terrorise all his opponents by a dexterous use of this dangerous weapon. With it he would tear the flesh or terribly mutilate the face of any antagonist bold enough to stand up to him, and on this particular occasion, having completely discomfited the three policemen who alone represented the majesty of the law, the riotous scoundrel had taken possession of the whole market, as it were, and with a band of drunken ruffians, his instigators and abettors, he was creating havoc and

depredation among all and sundry. One poor battered policeman, accompanied by some village folks, came to my father, beseeching him to interfere in the interests of life and property. My father responded to the call of duty at once, and seeking not even the defence of a walking-stick, he, unarmed and fearless, sallied out to confront the passion-inflamed desperado. It must have afforded a strange contrast to see the tall, quiet, self-contained minister of the Gospel suddenly confronting the drunken cursing ruffian. For a moment the fellow was cowed by the quiet, incisive, penetrating speech of the minister; but then, some 'lewd fellows of the baser sort,' chafing at the moral restraint thus put upon them, began to hoot on the outskirts of the gathering crowd that was now attracted by curiosity, and began to hem in the two chief actors in this strange scene. My father, as I have said, was a practised athlete and a powerful man. Perhaps I had better allow the old villager who told me this tale to continue in his own words:—'Yer faither began to see that he would hae tae dae mair than admonish. Some of the Hielant drovers were crying oot tae "Handy" tae "Rip him up! Gie him yer cleek, man!" Some of us in the back-ground were ready wi' oor sticks to defend the minister if the drovers suld mak' a rush upon him. Handy raised his cleek, and was jist aboot tae claw the minister doon the face, whin, jist as quick as lichtnin', and as soople as a ram, yer faither bowed himsel' doon, and ran in wi' his heid atween Handy's legs; syne wi' his hands upon his thighs, he strauchened his great back, and sent the great muckle loonderin' scoondrel owre his heid jist like a ball fae a gun. Losh, Jeems, ye never

saw sic a sicht as the poor wratch wis when they pickit him up. There wis nae mair fechtin' that day, 'deed no!' and then the Homeric recital wound up with the exclamation, 'Losh, sirss, but he wis a swack man the minister!'

On another occasion, my brother George writes me, in one of his perambulations through the market, endeavouring to give a kindly word of counsel as he went, my father spied a nice-looking decent servant lass, who seemed in great distress, and was being rather roughly pulled about by two rustic admirers, who, inflamed with jealousy and whisky, were fighting with each other in their rude attempts to secure the honour of being the damsel's escort home. They were both decent enough fellows in their way, except at such a carnival season as the market time, and both were well known to my father.

With the practical good sense which was one of his marked characteristics, he at once saw that if the girl could only get one away from the other her natural good influence would assert itself, and the angry passions be stilled. He had a shrewd suspicion that very possibly the result of his interference would bring about a happy matrimonial *dénouement;* and so, to the girl's intense relief, but to the bewildered astonishment of the two amorous rustic swains, they suddenly found themselves in the strong nervous grip of a veritable six-foot theologian. He twisted them about as easily as if they had been wisps of straw, and bringing their two heads smartly together with a sounding thwack—which spoke a good deal as to the hollowness and toughness of their crania—he held them apart and said, 'Noo, lassie,

whilk would ye like to see ye hame?' The poor girl, thus forced to make her choice, at once pointed to the more favoured swain of the two, and he, receiving a kindly impulse from the minister, was taken in tow by the pleased servant lassie, my father saying, 'Awa' wi' him, then, and I'll haud this yin till ye get a fair start.'

You may depend upon it that the prisoner of war received some wholesome fatherly advice during the next quarter of an hour, which, it is to be hoped, did him lasting good. The sequel, I believe, was after the most approved pattern, as Jock and Tibby became man and wife, and as the story books say, 'lived happy ever afterwards.'

While on this subject, I may as well detail a few more of the instances that are on record among my letters of exhibitions of strength and athletic prowess on the part of 'the minister.' He was fond of all manly games and athletic exercises, but had an instinctive horror of gambling, and looked on that as degrading to all true sport.

During his college days, on one occasion while coming home from Aberdeen, he and his brother David had to pass through Ballater where one of these fairs was in full swing. They were accompanied by a classfellow named Keith Gordon, who was a splendid specimen of the stalwart proportions for which his clan has always been famous. While idly strolling through the fair they were accosted by an elderly man, one William Grant, who, as was customary, went by the name of his farm, and was therefore always known as 'Dubrach.' They saw 'Dubrach' steering his unsteady way towards them. He was, under certain circumstances, rather a

quarrelsome man, and sometimes brought no little trouble on his friends by his boastful vauntings and vapourings. My father, knowing his character, hastily arranged a plan with his companions by which they might stave off the threatened infliction. The plan was to affect the utmost cordiality, but each was to put forth all his strength in shaking hands with the unsuspicious object of their conspiracy. Up swaggered 'Dubrach,' his unkempt hair flaunting in tawny locks over his broad shoulders, leaving behind him a fragrant flavour of pure Highland whisky, which exhaled from every pore of his skin. He boisterously hailed my father, holding out his hand, and loudly proclaiming his satisfaction at meeting with an acquaintance. The three young fellows knew that if they allowed him to join their party he would probably first of all insist upon their drinking more than was good for them; then he would proceed to vaunt his own prowess; next he would dare them to some feat of endurance or strength, and their encounter would wind up with a challenge to mortal combat, culminating, in all probability, in a vulgar market brawl.

Poor 'Dubrach' spoke with a beautiful Highland accent; so, coming up with hand extended, and a rather vacuous smile on his fiery countenance, he cried out, 'Weel, Maister Inglis, fu āāre you, an' fu āāre you āāā?' My father, putting forth all his strength into a responsive grip, nearly brought the blood oozing from below the finger-nails of his victim as he said, 'Oh! I'm fine, I thank ye! Fu are ye yersel'?' 'Dubrach's' fingers were almost sticking together from the terrific squeeze: but the claims of Highland hospitality must be respected,

and so, turning to my uncle David, he repeated his salutation, and was rewarded with another squeeze, given this time with both hands, my uncle standing on tiptoe on account of his lesser stature, so as to put all his pith into it.

Again 'Dubrach's' mouth twisted up with an agonized contortion; but still not comprehending the situation, he, with rather a sickly smile, turned to Keith Gordon, and proffered him his tingling digits, no doubt inwardly wishing that he had left the young students alone.

Keith looked a perfect son of Anak; moreover, he had a grip like a blacksmith's vice, and actually, as my father used to express it when telling the story, 'girning his teeth,' he gave poor 'Dubrach' a grip that almost reduced his bones to a jelly, and left his hand limp and lifeless; then, with a pleased smile they left the old toper to recover his equanimity. Certainly for that occasion they had taken all the usual pugnacity out of him.

Our neighbour, next to the manse, was a Mrs. Low —a dear kindly old body, whose husband, when I was a boy, was a fine substantial farmer up Lethnot way, and always went by the name of his farm, 'Margie.' Mrs. Low, talking to my brother Tom, gives another illustration of my father's prowess in these words:

'One market day,' she said, 'a drucken ruffian was gaein up the street cursin' and swearin', and using the foulest langwitch imaginable. Your faither happened to be passing, and rebuked him, but jist got a volley of "back chat" for his pains; so he jist gaed and

grippit the man by the back o' the neck wi' yae hand and clappit his ither hand on the man's mou', and shook him jist as a doug wid a rabbit. I can tell ye,' the dear old lady continued, 'he shut up the chield most effectually.'

At another time, as William Kidd, the village tailor, narrates, all the young fellows in the village were practising for the annual Highland games on the market muir. My father had been out visiting, and happened to pass the gathering of young athletes. He looked on for some time with kindly interest at their trials of prowess, and then, in a spirit of genial emulation, he asked the lads if he might have a try; and 'without taking off his coat,' as the tailor said, 'he beat the best fellows in the crowd at everything they liked to mention,' and left them amid their appreciative cheers, humorously deprecating the suggestion made, that he should enter for all the events at the approaching games.

Alick Carr, the village blacksmith, as honest and loyal a soul as ever lived, tells this story:—One time Geordie Ferrier (our faithful servant for over thirty years) was taking in some moorland with a four-horse plough. I should explain that 'taking in' in the dialect of the Mearns means really 'breaking up' moorland for the first time—in fact bringing it into tillage. Of course such land is encumbered with stumps and stones and all sorts of natural impediments to cultivation. It is necessary, therefore, that it should be broken up with the most powerful plough that can be procured; and so, when a four-horse plough is mentioned, the reader can easily imagine that it must be a

very heavy and cumbrous implement. In fact, amongst the ploughmen, to be able to work a four-horse plough is supposed to be such a test of strength as can only be safely sustained by the most powerful thews and sinews. Now Geordie was a bit of a wag, a splendid specimen of his class, and a very powerful fellow; and being accustomed to all the freedom with his employer that long service in the kindly old Scottish way tended to beget, he thought he would try a bit of a practical joke upon 'the minister.' My father had come up to see how the work was progressing. Geordie was staggering along in the furrows, with the perspiration streaming from his knitted brows, the muscles of his arms standing out like cords, and his wrists trembling under the nervous strain put upon them by the shocks and impediments met with by the great gleaming cumbrous ploughshare. With an attempt at rustic pleasantry he dared my father to 'haud the ploo for a rigg.' My father, nothing loath, cast off his coat and took hold of the stilts, and, somewhat to Geordie's discomfiture, he turned a better furrow than Geordie himself had been doing. As they neared the end of the "rigg" Geordie thought that he would play the minister a trick. Of course with such a heavy plough, a very wide circle has to be made at the end of the furrow, to enable the great unwieldy implement to be swung round, without putting too great a strain on the endurance of the ploughman. To turn the horses quickly, therefore, would simply bury the ploughshare in the soil, and very likely jerk a weak or unprepared ploughman clean off his feet. The blacksmith, when telling the story, used always to remark with a grin, 'But feth, lads, yer faither was mair than a match for

Geordie. Geordie klinkit the horses roond geyan shairp ; but yer faither liftit the ploo clean oot, and whuppit it roond, and then he said, "Come noo, Geordie, dinna ye try to tak' occasion o' the minister. See if ye can get anither man in a' the pairis that could dae that. Ye see, my man, *I* can do *your* wark, but I sair doot ye cudna dae mine!" '

Another old parishioner says : 'Eh, sirss! yer faither was a gallant, powerfu', wyselike man. Sic a grip o' the hand he gied ye. It was jist a pairfec treat tae shak' haunds wi' him.'

At one time we had staying with us at the manse a certain Captain H. He was a fine-looking young fellow of good family, and had held a commission in a crack regiment. He had, however, become a victim to the drink habit, and his friends had put him under my father's kindly care to see if a reformation could be effected.

The Captain was a man of great natural gifts, with a most social disposition, but morally weak. He had an intense affection for my father, whose influence over him was of the most beneficial character. For many months Captain H. had been living a happy and contented life in the manse ; but at length in an evil hour he got seduced from sobriety by a rollicking banker in the village and some of his set, whose heads were harder, and whose consciences were probably tougher, than the poor Captain's. One night he fairly burst all decent bounds, stayed out late, and came home very tipsy and defiant. Some of the servants must have let him in, and from them he demanded more drink. They, however, good-naturedly tried to persuade him

to retire quietly to his room, but he insisted with drunken obstinacy that they should comply with his demands. The fracas soon brought my father on the scene. The servants fled to their room, and H., by this time worked up into a most defiant state, began to bully and bluster, and in response to my father's pained reproaches, he point-blank refused to go to bed, saying with an oath, 'I will do what I please, sir!' My brothers, Jack and Tom, had crept out of bed in their night clothes, and were listening at the top of the stairs, boy-like enjoying what I have no doubt they thought was a piece of excitement especially got up for their benefit. Tom writes me that the Captain's drunken obstinacy seemed to rouse my father. All at once he thundered out, 'You shall not do what you please in this house, sir. I am master here!' and picking up the gallant Captain as if he were a mere baby, he flung him over his shoulder, carried him upstairs, threw him on the bed, undressed him like a helpless child, and nearly cowed the life out of him. 'Next morning,' continues Tom, 'poor H. said to me, "By Gad! thy father is a fine man, laddie!"'

Another feat of strength, says Tom, was the following:—'One day some of us boys had been playing with a ball, throwing it up to the roof of the manse and catching it as it fell. At last, however, it stuck in the guttering, and we went in (as we usually did with all our boyish troubles) to put the case before my father. He got the longest ladder procurable in the village and sent me up. I must have weighed about ten stones at the time. I could not quite reach the place,

so he lifted me, ladder and all, up to the required height.'

I remember going up to Edinburgh on one occasion with him. We travelled second class. A great drunken navvy, a powerful-looking sort of chap, came up and insisted on getting into the carriage, which contained two or three women and children besides ourselves. My father, stepping out, told him that there was no room, but he, with an oath, insisted on trying to force his way into the carriage. The minister, however, at once swung him right round like a 'peerie,' and said, 'You shall not come in here, you drunken brute; you should be in a cattle truck.'

I hope I am not wearying my readers with these details of what, to us boys, was a great source of pride; but, with all his strength and bodily activity, my father was no less famed all over the country-side for his peculiar gentleness and tenderness to all who were in any distress. He had a most affectionate, compassionate disposition, and was keenly alive to every call made upon the emotional side of his nature; and in all circumstances of affliction or sickness he was ever, from his quick sympathy and warm-heartedness, 'a very refuge in time of trouble' to all who had need of his ministrations. Nothing I could say can, I think, give a better idea of his character than his own unstudied words, spoken at the great Convocation in Edinburgh, 1842. I make a quotation from that well-known book, *Annals of the Disruption*, vol. i. p. 57. It is as follows:—

'The remark of another country minister, the Rev. R. Inglis of Edzell, attracted notice at the time. "Some

of my brethren," he said, "have a difficulty in pledging themselves to go out because of their numerous families. I merely wish to say that that is one of my reasons for resolving to make the sacrifice. I am the father of a young family. I shall have little to leave them, more especially if we are forced to give up our livings. But I want at least to leave them a good name. I wish all my children, when I am gone, to be able to say that they are the children of an honest man."'

CHAPTER VII

Our Village School — The Old-time Dominie — Anecdotes — Our Village Dominies — 'Peter Pundwecht' — 'Creeshie Pow' — Home Discipline of the Old Régime — The Meagre Mental Equipment of our Dominie—Contrast between the Old System and the New—Our School Games and Boyish Toys : 'Bools and Peeries'; Hockey—Curling—'Gowf'—The Teetotum—Jeems Dunn's Letter—Lassies' Games—Quaint old Rhymes and Customs—The Annual Blanket-washing—A Contrast—Hogmanay—The Shorter Carritches—School-book Rhymes—'Het Rows an' Butter Baiks'—'Nifferin'"—Nursery Rhymes—A Schoolboy Conspiracy and how it ended.

One of the results following on the Disruption was the great impetus given afresh to the education of the young, and the multiplication of schools throughout the length and breadth of the land. It was not to be expected that, with the bitter feelings raging between the opposing sides, any unanimity could prevail on this matter; and so when the Free Church had become, in a measure, consolidated, after that marvellous and ever-memorable response to the appeal for funds had been made, and when as a result churches, manses, and colleges, began to stud the land in all directions, it was only to be expected

that the earnest zeal and princely liberality of the people would not stop short until schools too became part of the working system of the new church.

In our village a humble dwelling-house of the ordinary rural type was the only available building. Nothing less fitted for the purpose to which it was proposed to adapt it could well have been conceived. There was the ordinary latch-door in the centre, with a dingy window on either side, and another small glazed aperture in the back wall, directly facing the door. When you entered, a step downwards led you on to an uneven floor of rough boards. The ceiling was very low, and had been boarded over between the 'cupples,' making a sort of loft above, to which access was given by a trap-door opening downwards, and kept in its place by a stout wooden pin thrust into one of the joists; and in this loft the schoolmaster was wont to store sundry sorts of produce, which he had to take from time to time from his pupils in lieu of fees.

The desks and benches were of the rudest description, and, with the long wooden seats, formed part of a free-will offering from the members of the congregation who had followed my father through all the fierce controversy of 'the ten years' conflict.' The fireplace had originally held a grate in which coals could be burned, but as all the fuel was supplied by the scholars, and as it consisted of peats, whin-roots, and faggots, with an occasional load of pine-tree 'baucks,' the grate had long since been discarded, and the smouldering fire of wood or peat, backed up with two or three shovelsful of saw-

dust from the sawmill 'up the watter,' was kept constantly burning upon the dusty hearth. I do not remember that the ashes were taken out with any great regularity, as that was a task devolving on the worst-conducted boys and girls, to whom it was awarded as a punishment for stupidity in lessons or bad behaviour during school hours; so one can easily imagine the accumulation of 'ase' that generally filled the hearth.

At one end of the gloomy apartment was an untidy corner, fenced in from the desks and forms by a barricade of the said contributions of fuel; and here a great barrel of shavings collected from the carpenters' shops stood sentry over a piled-up stack of logs, roots, peats, and other sorts of fuel, including dry whin bushes and broom cowes for 'kindling,' which the scholars had to supply or go without a fire. Occasionally the excess overflowed all decent limits of space, and had to be transferred to the loft above the schoolroom.

Upon the discoloured walls hung two or three wretched maps—torn and tattered, and these, with the 'maister's' spider-legged, deal-wood desk, in a corner near the fireplace, composed the furniture of this temple of learning.

Naturally, at such a time, when calls were frequently made on the slender resources of the people for Church-building, Mission extension, Sustentation Fund, and other vital claims of the new organisation, it may easily be imagined how slender the pittance must have been that was available for the schoolmaster's salary. He had therefore to supplement his official income,

as I have said, by fees in kind; and it says much for the high spirit of the people, and their noble response to the call that conscience made upon them, that, in hundreds upon hundreds of parishes in Scotland, fairly good schools, in which all the rudiments of an ordinary education were given, were established and kept going. Indeed, as time went on, the scholastic system of the Free Church of Scotland became quite as noble an evidence of the independence, sincerity, and liberality of her adherents, as any of the great well-known funds, schemes, and trusts which still stand out as a monument to all time of the noble spirit which animated all ranks of the people in their glorious struggle for Freedom of Conscience and Liberty of Church Government.

I have mentioned that my father had himself been a schoolmaster before he was regularly inducted into a charge as minister. Indeed, he had every requisite for the vocation of the true teacher; and by this time the profession was assuming a much higher place in the esteem of all thoughtful men. It was becoming recognised, in fact, as not inferior in importance to the position of the 'meenister himsel'.'

For a long time, however, in 'the cauldrife days of Erastianism,' both dominie and 'meenister' had been held in but little esteem. It was no uncommon thing to see the village schoolmaster pursuing two callings simultaneously — that for instance of village cobbler as well as village pedagogue. In fact, the famous John Pounds was such an one.

I may illustrate this point by an anecdote told by Mr. Fenton, Latin teacher in, I think, Montrose Academy. One day an anxious parent brought his

boy to the teacher, and very impressively confided him to his care, saying:

'Ye see, sir, if he get the grace o' God, we mean to mak' a meenister o' him.'

'Ay!' said Fenton; 'an' if he dinna get the grace o' God, what then?'

'Oh weel!' said the parent, with a sigh of resignation, 'in that case we'll jist hae tae mak' a dominie o' him!'

A good story, in this connection, is that told by the genial and lovable old Professor Blackie. He was asked to procure a teacher for a Highland parish school, and had received numerous applications — amongst others, one from a student in his own class, named Macfadyen. He called the young man up, and said: 'Dugald, the teacher must be married. Are you married?' 'No,' was the reply; 'but I know a goot, godly wumman in ta Hielants, who iss bose willing ant able.' That settled it.

Our first dominie was a gentle, sallow-faced, rather asthmatic, but scholarly man, of the name of Mitchell. He was an inveterate smoker, and had apparently an absolute horror of fresh air: so that in this gloomy den, with the blazing fire at one end, every aperture carefully shut, and the reek and breath from some sixty or seventy damp scholars ascending like incense into the steamy atmosphere, one can easily imagine what a depressing effect their surroundings must have had upon the poor little unfortunates, who were supposed to be here 'drinking deep of the Pierian spring'; and it is little wonder that, after a few years of this incessant hard work and dismal environment, poor Mr. Mitchell succumbed.

Our next pedagogue was a meek little Highlandman, with 'a short leg and a shorter,' as one of the villagers expressed it. He had been a victim to some disease of the knee joint, which had contracted one leg, causing the limb to bend outwards at the knee. To make locomotion more easy, some village blacksmith had made a wondrous arrangement of hoop iron, which was fastened to the foot and shrunken limb by straps, and which, in place of a foot, terminated in a round knob, very much like one of the weights used by the shopkeepers. From this contrivance, poor Macdonald was always known amongst the boys as 'Peter Pundwecht.' Peter did not remain long in the place. The 'spirit was willing but the flesh was weak,' and when he once, in an evil hour for himself, attempted to inflict chastisement on a great hulking fellow—the son of a farmer up Lethnot way—his power for usefulness was thenceforth hopelessly gone. The lumbering lout of a boy quietly took him up in his arms, carried him through the observant, and, I am afraid, applauding ranks of rebel sympathisers, and deposited poor Peter head-foremost in the shavings barrel, where the only thing that could be seen of the dethroned dictator was one old boot, and the 'pundwecht' aforesaid, making desperate kicks into the air, to an accompaniment of smothered exclamations and gyrating shavings. After this, Peter saw fit to resign.

Our next 'maister' was a man of quite a different stamp. If his accomplishments had been even half-way up to his own estimation and appraisement, he would have been the finest pedagogue that ever

wielded the 'tawse' since the days of Socrates the Wise. His appreciation of his own personal appearance too was on a par with his belief in his own wisdom and infallibility. He rather affected the 'fop,' and was, I think, the first man I ever saw who really used pomatum—I suppose I may call it pomatum, although I have a shrewd suspicion, looking back from the vantage-point of years and experience, that it was more likely tallow or grease, or common oil of some sort. At all events this weakness earned for him the name of 'Creeshie Pow.' He had a brother in the village, a decent quiet cobbler, who was one of my father's deacons; and thus 'Creeshie Pow' was supposed to have some influence in the Kirk-session. I do not think I am unjust or unkind to his memory when I say that he must have been a somewhat vain, weak, and rather stupid person. However, he managed to keep pretty fair discipline; but he was an exemplification of the old proverb that 'a little knowledge is a dangerous thing,' and also of the apostolic deliverance that 'knowledge puffeth up.' Our dominie was an apt illustration of how very little knowledge may be required to do a mighty deal of 'puffing up.'

Normal schools for the training of teachers were just then being established, but our poor dominie had never undergone any systematic training as a professional teacher; in fact, if I mistake not, he had already tried several callings, at none of which he had been a pronounced success. He was a fairly good-looking fellow: and he found that, with a good deal of assurance, he could make his scanty stock of knowledge go a pretty

long way; so he ruled over our little kingdom with a rod of iron, or, to be more literal, with tawse of hard leather; while we, thanks to the excellent parental supervision over our lessons at home, made more progress than could have been imagined possible. Of course the dominie took all the credit.

I might digress here for a moment to say how praiseworthy was the sense of duty among these rude villagers and simple rural folk in this regard. The home-preparation of lessons by the children was always looked upon by the parents in my young days as really something akin to a solemn religious duty. The good folks were fully seized with a true appreciation of the value of education; and no matter how poverty-stricken the home, how irksome the daily toil, how unattractive the prospects for the future of their children might be, parents deemed it a sacred duty to see that school tasks were faithfully prepared at home; and to this splendid parental discipline much of the success of the Scottish school system is undoubtedly due.

To return to our dominie and our school. We had of course a standing feud with the parish school; the boys attending it being dubbed 'moderates,' while they in their turn named us 'nons,' an abbreviation for 'non-intrusionists.' In the winter time the battles between the two factions were fierce and prolonged. Naturally we had our champions on either side, and party feeling, I am sure, ran quite as high amongst the school children as it did between the parents.

I think I can still hear the pompous, measured tones of our ringleted and pomatumed pedagogue call out,

'Pro-nownseeation class step this way.' There was always a terrible emphasis on the 'nownse,' and 'he rolled the word as a sweet morsel under his tongue.' To this day I have often found it hard to divest myself of the awful twists in 'pronownseeation' that this paragon of learning gave to most of the common English words; another that I remember was 'rohoddondron' for rhododendron. One of his favourite words was Nebuchadnezzar: 'pronownsed' Knee-buck-ed-ned-zar. In fact the poor man was too ambitious. He started a class for drawing and water-colour painting, although he knew nothing about either; and his attempts at Latin excited even our ridicule, although it was little enough Latin that we knew. Geography was attempted to be taught on the scarecrow maps I have mentioned, by means of a stumpy blackened pointer, which, when not being used in the Geography class, did duty as a poker. But what indeed could have been expected from a system that handed over the care of sixty or seventy boys and girls of all ages, varying from four up to eighteen, to one man, and he having so poor a mental equipment as that of my old dominie, 'Creeshie Pow'?

Let anyone think of the splendid opportunities young people now enjoy. Teachers now are highly-trained professional experts, specialists in the highest sense of the word, whose whole system of instruction is based on the systematised lessons of experience, administered under a lavish expenditure, which, in the days I speak of, was utterly beyond the reach of even the well-to-do classes. Then think of the palatial buildings in which the young scholars of the present day are housed.

Every attention paid to comfort and hygienic requirements ; furniture and fittings of special adaptation to the work in hand ; educational appliances of the most perfect character ; the large playgrounds replete with ingenious contrivances for salutary recreation. When one contrasts all these marvellous adaptations of ingenuity, forethought, and wise expenditure with the dingy surroundings and squalid poverty of the olden times, it is surely not too much to expect that the rising generation, who are entering on life's battle under such splendid auspices, should carry on the march of human progress with a quicker step, and hasten that great consummation, to which all education is but a means, when 'the brotherhood of man' shall be no longer a mere sentimental aspiration, but shall become indeed and in verity an accomplished fact under the acknowledged sway of the one Universal Father.

When I think of the old schooldays, I cannot help falling into this train of thought, for, even in such apparently trivial things as our boyish games and childish toys, the tremendous advances of scarce half a lifetime are very curious and suggestive. Just think for a moment of the wonderful ingenuity and the wealth of inventive skill that are lavished on the scientific toys of the present day. Look for instance at the school prizes, the Christmas presents—veritable works of art—which modern children have become so accustomed to that they turn up their dainty little noses in disdain if the productions of the current year do not outvie in splendour of colouring and elegance of finish the productions of previous years. It almost makes one feel indignant when one thinks of the—

by comparison—primitive and archaic toys and books which we used to prize so much in those days which now seem so distant.

Verily, few flowers, and those of a very homely pattern, surrounded the paths of learning in those old-time village-schools.

The implements of our chief games were 'bools' and 'peeries,'—*Anglice*, marbles and tops. Our 'bools' were known in schoolboy dialect as 'piggers,' 'marleys,' and 'sclaiteys.' There were no lustrous glass globes with beautiful kaleidoscopic patterns running through the liquid sphere, such as we have nowadays. The 'piggers' were just crudely-formed, coarsely-burned earthenware. The 'marleys' were made of a kind of red clay hardened in the fire; and the 'sclaiteys' were, as their name signifies, of slate. The 'nicker,' sometimes also called a 'plunker' (and every boy prided himself upon having a favourite nicker), was 'a pigger' which had been partly vitrified in the fire, and generally had one side burned to a darker hue than the other. It was reserved for leading off with in the game, and was seldom risked as a stake.

Our 'peeries' were made of beech or other hard wood, each having a little peg at the top, like the 'tappie-toorie' of a Balmoral bonnet, and were shod at the apex with a good steel or iron 'neb,' ground to a fine point by the proud possessor, and firmly set in the hard, tough wood. Well did the eager boyish fingers know how to wind up the 'peerie' and dash it with unerring aim into the centre of the ring, where to split his opponent's 'peerie,' or scatter the impounded cluster of tops belonging to the other boys, was con-

sidered the perfection of sport and the highest achievement of skill.

Cricket was scarcely known; 'shinty,' or as some called it 'hockey,' was a great winter game, and was very often played on the ice. The 'ba'' was generally made by one of the village 'souters' from cuttings of leather, surrounded by many a strand of 'rosety' twine wound round and round until the ball was as hard and firm as a modern cricket ball. The favourite school ba' was made out of the worsted of an old stocking wound round a cork, and 'an auld stockin'' was always at a premium, and hailed as treasure-trove. The hockey stick, or ba' club, was searched for with great care amongst the hazel coppices by the river or on the breezy uplands, where the broom cowe and whin 'buss' disputed possession of the hills with the crimson heather. Not unfrequently the journeymen and apprentices of the village would join with the boys in a game of ba' club on the village muir, and sometimes pursue the sport with such *abandon* and partisanship that a regular out-and-out faction fight would finish up the proceedings. The masters and elders confined themselves to the curling-pond, where the rattle and clang of the polished granite disc as it whirred along the ice to the tuneful accompaniment of lusty cries, hilarious shouts, and ringing peals of laughter evoked by the varying chances of the play, fully justified the use of the time-honoured title of 'roaring' to the game. Clear through the snell, sharp air you could hear the whir-r-r of the 'Ailsa Craig' or 'Crawfordjohn' granite upon the ice, at a distance of miles. The shouts of 'Soop her up! soop her up!'—

'Lat her gang!'—'Straucht on the tee!'—'She's no up!'—'Ca' cannie!'—'Chap an' lie!'—'Mair pouther, man!'—'Oh, dagone the besom!'—'Feech, man! ye're no owre the hog score!'—and such like cries, betokened the intense interest taken by the players in the game; and sometimes even the presence of the parson and the squire could not repress the ruder spirits from using expressions which certainly—as Mark Twain would say—would 'not improve the sale of a Sunday-school book,' if printed therein. A few of the enthusiasts during the summer months would play 'golf' on the whinny muir, where 'bunkers' and countless pitfalls for the unwary player were plentiful, as well as smooth green stretches and long reaches of short, crisp sward, where the village cows had browsed the grass until the muir was like a billiard table.

Among indoor games the 'teetotum' was, I think, the only approach to an instrument of gambling known in our ingenuous and unsophisticated boyish experience. We had no 'gate-money' contests in those days. The brazen-lunged vulture of the betting ring had not put his talons on any of our sports. We played for pure love of the game, and liked to see the best men win. The 'totum was, like the 'peerie,' a home-made article, turned out by the good-natured 'wricht,' who invariably made them for his favourites among the boys, free of charge. This fact alone shows what an arcadian time I am speaking of. The toy consisted of a little square piece of wood, pointed at one end and having a slender stem stuck in the other, like an apple-stalk; and with this wabbling instrument, twirled between the finger and thumb, we used to surreptitiously gamble for

'preens,' cherry stanes, nuts, 'buckies,' peas, 'sweeties,' and what not; the general currency, however, being the ubiquitous and inexpensive 'preen.' In the manse the moral standards of the ruling powers slightly differed; my good-natured father not seeing much harm in playing the game for 'preens'; my mother, more of a Puritan perhaps, looking upon it as a dangerous departure from the strict line of principle. On the four sides of the teetotum were imprinted the letters D, A, N, T. If the letter D turned up, when the instrument was spun, the eager onlookers shouted out in their shrill trebles, 'D—Dunt doon ane!' and the unsuccessful player had to contribute from his capital one 'preen' to the general pool on the table. If A turned up, the procedure was just reversed, the cry being, 'A—Tak' ane.' Should N appear as the result of the spin, an exultant cry arose from the players of, 'N—Nicklety, naething!'—the 'nickle,' as one esteemed correspondent suggests, being really a corruption of the Latin *nihil*. While if T turned up, the triumphant spinner swept the whole pool into his hoard to the accompaniment of, 'T—Tak' them a'!'

My esteemed friend and valued correspondent, James Macgregor Dunn, as true an Angusshire-man as ever left the latitude of his native brose in search of good meat broth, who is now a successful farmer on the Richmond River, in New South Wales, reminds me in a most characteristically humorous letter, that 'there were twa kinds o' teetotums in my skule-days—yin, fower-sided, with the letters T, H, N, and D' (the H in this case stood for 'halvers,' the player who turned it up taking half the pool, the other letters had the same

significance as I have above explained). Mr. Dunn continues, 'The ither had echt sides, on which were the numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, 2, 4, 6, 8. These 'totums were known as "shoppies," and were usually bocht at the fair, being made of bone, boxwood, or even ivory. Some, however, were "haimert made," the production of some clever loonie, or perhaps that of a muckle brither, handy wi' his whittle. The echt-sided teetotum was spun in the same way as the other; and while birlin', the spinner had to cry out, "Odds or evens?"—If he said "odds," and it turned up say a 5, he took five out of the pool; but if it turned up an even number, say 6, he had to place that number in the pool,' etc.

At the frequent tea-pairties, forfeits was one of the favourite devices for passing time. The lassies out of doors had games of their own, chief among which was the skipping-rope and the 'pallaly,' the latter known politely in Edinburgh language as 'playing at the pitcher'; but perhaps more universally known as 'hop Scotch.' I must, however, plead guilty to a complete ignorance of the intricate mysteries of this undoubtedly ancient game. Besides these, there were many quaint old games, to which quaint old rhymes, set to quaint old tunes, were sung or chanted. For instance, there was one in which the girls, dividing themselves into two equal groups, addressed each other in a sing-song fashion, thus :—

'Have you any bread and wine?
Bread and wine, bread and wine?
Have you any bread and wine?
Ma theerie an' ma thorie.'

The other side would then respond—

'Yes, we have some bread and wine,
Bread and wine, bread and wine;
Yes, we have some bread and wine,
Ma theerie an' ma thorie.'

The first side then again took up the chant, singing—

'We shall have one glass of it,' etc.

To which came the reply—

'One glass of it you shall not get,' etc.

Again the first side, evidently representing the Royalist party, sang—

'We are King George's loyal men.'

To which the rebels replied—

'What care we for King George's men?' and so on.

In another, the circle having been formed, the children swung rhythmically round and round to the following chant:—

'Here's a poor widow, she's left alone;
All her daughters are married and gone.
Come choose the east, come choose the west,
Come choose the one that you love best.'

This could be played by both boys and girls, and was the favourite method of detecting the secrets of our youthful affinities, as each boy would be sure to choose his childish sweetheart.

Then there was 'thread the needle-e'e, boys.' It began with

'How many miles to London town?
Six, or seven, or nine or one?'

Another one went thus—

'Gie's a preen to stick i' my thoom,
To carry my lady to London toon.
Oh London toon's a bonnie braw place;
It's a' covered over wi' gold an' lace,' etc.

Of course there was 'hi' spy,' and many other games of a kindly social character, which begot good comradeship; and at their bare mention many a dear boyish comrade's face starts vividly to life on memory's screen, though, alas! most have long since gone to the shadow land.

Our boys had some quaint old customs too, some of which show how habitual was this tendency to drop into rhyme, and how very persistent this habit of the Scottish rural character has been in all ages. For instance, if a flight of crows appeared over the village, the boys would drop their 'bools' or 'peeries' to gaze at the cawing cohort, and shout as if in emulation of the noisy flock, cleaving their clumsy way homewards through the evening air—

'Craw! Craw! yer mither's awa'
For poother and lead to shoot ye a'.'

While, as one member of the flock after another forged ahead, we strove to urge the laggards to swifter flight by jeering shouts, and by calling out, 'Black Jock hinmost, Black Jock hinmost'; and we would vociferate this rather meaningless taunt until our shrill little voices would completely drown the noisy clamour of the cawing rooks.

Another of our boyish rhymes was—

'I see the gowk, and the gowk sees me,
Atween the berry buss an' the aiple tree;'

frequently repeated on the first appearance of the 'gowk' or cuckoo in early spring.

Another, having no special significance, but which would be shouted out in pure boyish exuberance, and as in some way satisfying the love of jingle and rhythm I have alluded to, was—

'Davie Reed—The deil's deid
An' buried in a bowie.'

But the allusions to the demise of 'the puir deil' were very varied and frequent.

Jamie Dunn, for instance, once sent me a letter with the superscription—

'Some say the deil's deid,
An' buried amang shingles;
Some say he'll rise again,
An' fleg Jamie I—gl—s.'

This was descending to very thinly veiled personality indeed.

Yet one more went thus—

'Some say the deil's deid,
An' buried at Kirkcaldie;
Some say he's up again
An' danced The Hielan' Laddie.'

There was one ancient rhyme, said to be in part as old as the time of the Druids, which we in our boyish games were wont to use as a sort of mystic cabala, by which we cast lots to ascertain who should perform certain chosen functions in certain games. For instance, if we wished to chose the hider in 'hi' spy,' we ranged ourselves in a circle, and some one of the band, standing

in the centre like an officiating priest, would repeat the formula, at every word pointing to a boy, till each in turn had had his word bestowed on him. Thus it went round and round, till, as the last word 'oot' was uttered, the recipient of that word stood aside, till at length the selected one was left standing alone and had to fulfil the task thus thrust upon him by lot.

I have given this rhyme in a former book of mine.[1] It varies somewhat throughout the Mearns, but in our village it went thus—

'Eenerty, feenerty, fickerty, feg,
El, del, Domin, egg;
Irkie, birkie, storie, rock,
An, tan, toose, jock;
Black fish, white troot,
Gibbie Ga—ye're oot.'

The last two lines are, I doubt not, interpolations of a more recent date, but the first four are undoubtedly of very great antiquity.

Mr. Dunn has sent me another, which I have never seen in print, and which goes thus—

'Eenneri, anneri, sirterie, sannerie,
Draps o' vinegar, noo begun;
Eet, aat, moose fat,
Carrie diddle—play the fiddle.
Tike Bo! Bizz!'

'Bizz' had the same significance and played the same part as 'oot' does in the more ancient rhyme given above.

[1] *Sport and Work on the Nepaul Frontier*, by Maori. Macmillan and Co. London: 1878.

Sometimes a mild practical joke would be played by one boy upon another, in this way. He would call out the name of his victim in a concerned tone, as if wishing to convey some important message. When the unsuspicious one obeyed the summons, the wicked urchin, amid the appreciative jeers and laughter of his companions, would hop about shouting—

'I gar'd ye luik,
I gar'd ye cruik,
I gar'd ye thraw yer neck aboot!'

Another girls' game was a mixture of 'hunt the slipper' and 'kiss in the ring,' and went thus—the company singing all together—

'I sent a letter to my love;
I droppit it; I droppit it.
I sent a letter to my love,
But lost it by the way.'

And then the whole rustic little comedy is enacted, the plot being worked out in various rhymes, which I regret to say I have forgotten, if indeed I ever learned them, as after all it was 'only a lassies' game.'

My brother George sends me one that is new to me and which I do not remember having seen in print—

'They that wash on Monanday
Hae a' the week tae dry;
They that wash on Tyseday
Are no far by;
They that wash on Wednesday
Are nae sair tae mean (*i.e.* are well enough off;)
They that wash on Thursday
May get their claes clean;

They that wash on Friday
Hae gey muckle need ;
They that wash on Setterday
Are dirty daws indeed.'

This was very often sung, George assures me, by the buxom lassies of the village, at the annual blanket-washing, which was a great occasion for a rustic daffin' and fleechin' and flirtation generally. The *modus operandi* was somewhat thus—

In the early morning, the men folk, before going to their work, selected a secluded and suitable spot near the river or burn side, in the centre of which they erected a rude sort of fireplace with any blocks of stone or divots that might be handy. In this they would light a fire of logs, peats, and brushwood, and then some huge caldron or three-legged pot (very likely the only one in the community, but which would be willingly lent to all who might requisition it) was hung, gipsy fashion, over the fire.

The great tubs were trundled down to the scene of operations. Piles of dingy blankets, and all the accumulated woollen clothing that now required an annual cleansing were boiled in the pot with soap and soda, or were placed in the tubs and soused in boiling water ; and the scene was indeed a busy and a cheerful one. The young women could not well scrub the great heavy blankets and woollen clothes as they could linen sheets ; and so baring their shapely legs to the knee, with updrawn kirtles, they stamped the blankets in the tubs, holding on to each other meanwhile, amid screams of laughter, and keeking coyly over their shoulders to see that no ill-mannered swain was spying upon them from some

sheltered nook, in which case, if discovered, the whole bevy of damsels would chase the daring intruder, with bickers full of hot, soapy water, and, if they caught him, woe betide him for his rash curiosity. When the blankets had been thoroughly churned and made clean by this primitive method, some of the more favoured young fellows would gather around, to help 'wring the washin',' as it was called; and then the bright clean clothes and blankets were spread out on bush and bracken and daisy-gemmed knoll, while the lads and lassies engaged in some merry game, or exchanged the rude endearments, so much affected by rustic swains of all climes, ages, and nationalities. The day was generally beautiful and the surroundings exquisite. The sun poured down floods of golden radiance, lighting up with dazzling brilliancy the vivid splashes of colour spread all around. Birds sang in every bough, bees hummed gaily, butterflies danced in the sunbeams, and the murmur and gurgle of the burn lulled every sense into an ecstacy of delight; the plump of the leaping trout as its silver-scaled body fell with a flop into the swift-running stream, after glancing for a moment in mid air like a streak of falling light,—the sighing of the amorous wind in the pine trees across the river,—the flash of radiant kingfisher, the glint of mill-wheel,—all made such a medley of sound and sights as would be sufficient in themselves to make the annual blanket-washing one of the most joyous occasions of the whole year. Who could help being in high spirits amid such an environment? The scent of the smoke, sweet and clean, from the burning peats and pine knots, arose like incense in the summer air; and when the mid-day

meal was shared by the lassies with the young lads from the village, no picnic party or gipsy encampment could have vied with the exuberant gaiety and *abandon* which characterised the whole gathering.

How different is the picture called up by the next rhyme which suggests itself to me! A pall of snow, icebound and hard, now covers the landscape. Huge wreaths fill every hollow; the shepherd painfully stumbles through the blinding drift in search of his fleecy, well-nigh frozen flock; the ploughman, with frost-nipped fingers, painfully hammers the ice in the great stone trough beside the stable door, to let his steaming horses get their drink.

The hard grip of winter is over all. Great fires are blazing merrily on every hearth. The ambrosial scent of the whisky-toddy steams out into the frosty air from the open door of the village inn. It is the New Year season. We do not keep Christmas in our village. There are no night-watch services, no joy-bells, no Christmas bush or mistletoe; but it is a season of hearty goodwill for all that, and kindly messages are sent round amongst all our kinsfolk, accompanied by New Year's gifts. When the short winter day draws to its early close, the young lads of the village would range themselves into line; and with twanging of fiddle, or tootling of flute, or more often to the ear-piercing screech of bagpipe, they perambulated the village and its neighbourhood, visiting the nearer farm-houses. Out in the cold winter's night, they would wake the echoes with the following appeal—

> 'Rise up, guidwife, and shak' yer feathers;
> Dinna' think that we are beggars.

Up stocks, doon stules,
Dinna' think that we are fules;
We are bairns come to play,—
Get up an' gie's oor Hogmanay.

'The day'll come when ye'll be deid;
Ye'll no care then for meal or breid.
Rise up, guidwife, and dinna sweir;
Deal oot yer breid, as lang's ye're here.
Wi' pooches fu' o' siller,
An' bottles fu' o' beer,
We bless you, and wish you
A Happy New Year.'

The allusion to 'stocks' in the above is to the kail stock or stem of the cabbage plant which always plays an important part in the Hogmanay and Hallow E'en celebrations; but of course it is not my function, in such a rambling record as this, to enter fully into a description of things which have been so much better and more accurately described by abler writers than I pretend to be. However, the reader can easily imagine the result of such an appeal in the olden times of which I am writing. The result generally was a quaffing of such plentiful libations to Bacchus, on the part both of the itinerant musicians, and of those whose hospitality they claimed, that the true blue temperance advocates of the thoroughgoing modern school would have been perfectly horrified. Assuredly in my young days the consumption of whisky was abnormally great; but then, as I have said, there was this saving virtue, the liquor was pure and good.

To come back to our schoolboy rhymes, however, this inveterate propensity to tag on a rhyme to every-

thing could not seemingly be suppressed. Our little book of shorter catechism, for instance, generally known as 'carritches' or 'quaistens,' had usually the letters of the alphabet marshalled in a goodly row at the end, for the behoof of the smaller scholars, who, for their sins, had painfully to pore over the abstruse Calvinistic tenets concentrated in this shudderingly-remembered compendium of theology, with which our poor infant intellects were dazed and drugged. I well remember with what a sense of relief we would turn from the bewildering problems of 'Effectual Calling and Original Sin,' to the dear old big block letters at the end. The long A and the corpulent B, the curly C and the humpbacked D, looked quite like old friends to us, after our brains had been muddled with the 'carritches,' and our fingers made to tingle with the tawse, which were a pretty frequent accompaniment to the catechism-class. To these letters we had set a sort of jingle going right through the alphabet; but the only part which I remember ran thus—

'*A* for Annie Anderson,
B for Betsy Broon,
C for Christy Clatterson, 'at clatters thro' the toon.'

And so on. Likewise to the well-known letters FINIS at the end of our schoolbooks, we set rather a meaningless rhyme, which went thus—

'*F* for France and *I* for dance,
N for Nicklety boundy;
J for Jess, the printer's wife,
And *S* for sugar candy.'

We had too a sort of confession of faith—a relic no

doubt of pre-Reformation times, and which had perhaps originally been some formula repeated by neophytes when entering some monastic establishment, or upon joining some of the brotherhoods or guilds. It went this way; let us take any name at random—

'Tammie Wilkie is my name,
Scotland is my nation;
Aigle is my dwelling-place,
And Christ is my salvation.'

and then it went on—

'When I am deid and in my grave,
And a' my banes are rotten,
This little beuk will tell my name
When I am clean forgotten.'

I regret to say that in these degenerate and irreverent times the old formula had been parodied, and more frequently ran thus—

'Tammie Wilkie is my name,
Scotland is my nation;
And for to claw the parritch pat,
It is my occupation.'

Another curious reminiscence of these old days comes back to me as I write, and is associated with this propensity to rhyme. When we encountered a snail, with his house on his back and his horns extended, we thought it incumbent on us thus to address the slimy and slow pedestrian—

'Wullie, ma buck, shoot oot yer horn!
An' ye'll get milk an' breid the morn.'

The fisher boys, when they encountered a small crab on the seashore, betrayed the same widespread propensity. Tapping the startled scampering 'wee beastie' on his horny shell, in allusion to the popular idea that if spoken to the crab will always scamper off towards the sea, they thus addressed their frightened captive, which would very often sham to be dead—

'Tip tap taesie,
The tide's comin' in:
If ye run a mile awa',
The tide will tak' ye in.'

Then, when a shower came on the boys would jump about crying out—

'Rainy rainy rattle stanes,
Dinna rain on me,
Rain on Johnnie Frostie far owre the sea.'

Another good game was known as 'het rows and butter baiks,' and was played thus:—One boy stood against the hillside or against a wall, and another boy, putting his head against the first one's stomach, made a 'backie,' which was immediately mounted by one of the boys from the crowd, who was not supposed to be known to the one that he bestrode. The captain of the game would now address the bowing lad, who was sustaining his unknown burden, in this fashion—

'Lanceman, lanceman lo!
Where shall this poor Scotchman go?
Shall he go east, or shall he go west,
Or shall he go to the huddie craw's nest?'

If he was sent to the hooded crow's nest (for that is

what it meant), he ranged himself alongside number one. If otherwise, he had to go to some indicated post and there remain until all engaged in the game were placed in their various positions, then the fun began in earnest. The three chief actors, and all who had remained in 'the crow's nest,' ranged themselves in line, and being armed with a Scotch schoolboy's best 'freen'—the stout Glengarry bonnet, held in readiness for the expected onslaught—the captain now yelled out: 'Het rows and butter baiks,' whereupon all those that had been banished to the outposts came rushing in, attempting to touch number one, who was surrounded by his legion of bonneters, who smacked and thrashed the invaders, till many a time the ribbands of the bonnets were torn to tatters, and the bonnets themselves divested of lining, and sometimes even torn asunder in the desperate fray. When the 'draiglers,' as the invading party were called, had touched number one, they in turn became the defending party, and the others took their places. 'It wis a graund game, but eh, sirss! it wis sair on the bonnets.'

Another great institution amongst the village schoolboys was that of barter, known as 'nifferin'.' For instance, such a conversation as follows would be quite common—

'Wull ye niffer a bit o' skyllie (slate pencil) for twa bools, Geordie?'

'Na', 'l no! But if ye gie's a bittie keelavine (lead pencil) I'll do't.'

Then an element of chance would be introduced into our 'nifferin' in this way. The article to be bartered would be held in our clenched fists, both

hands being shut, and, moving one over the other, the following quatrain would be spoken—

'Neevie, neevie, nick nack,
Filk han' wull ye tak'?
The richt or the wrang?
And I'll beguile ye if I can.'

There were other rhymes suitable for almost every boyish action; one I remember our old servant, Jean, used to croon to us boys at 'parritch-time.'

'O that I had ne'er been married,
I wad never hed nae care!
Noo I've gotten wife and bairns,
An' they cry crowdie ever mair.
Aince crowdie, twice crowdie,
Three times crowdie in a day.
Gin ye crowdie ony mair,
Ye'll crowdie a' ma meal away.'

And this reminds me of a poor little fellow who had got disgusted with the perpetual 'parritch,' and whose soul, like Isaac's, 'yearned for savoury food'; so one day, with a piteous appeal to his pious mother, he uttered his plaintive protest, by asking when he might expect to get some 'tea and loaf breid.'

'Oh, my dear,' said the mother, 'if *we're spared* we'll hae tea on Sunday.'

'Humph!' said the poor boy; 'and if *we're no spared* I suppose we'll jist get parritch as usual.'

Some of the nursery rhymes crooned by the old servants when putting us to bed merit space. If we resisted the putting off of shoes or stockings, the following legend generally overcame our opposition—

'John Smith, a fellow fine,
Can ye shoe this horse o' mine?
Yes indeed, and that I can,
Jist as weel as ony man.
Pit a bit upo' the tae,
Tae gar the horsie climb the brae;
Pit a bit upo' the brod,
Tae gar the horsie draw the load;
Pit a bit upo' the heel,
Tae gar the horsie pad weel, pad weel, pad weel', etc.—

every word being accompanied by a kindly, persuasive pat on the bare little feet, which generally chased the sulky fit away, and made our little faces beam again with gladness.

Another which used to dispel our weariness was a rhyme upon the features of the face, beginning at the chin, thus—

Chin, cherry,
Mou', merry,
Nose, nappy,
Cheeks, happy,
E'e, winkie,
Broo, brinkie.
Owre the hill and far awa'.'

There are many more of a similar character, which I but imperfectly remember; but I am afraid of exhausting my reader's patience, and so I must pass on to describe the catastrophe which ended my village-school experiences, and caused me to be transferred to a wider and more profitable sphere, so far as my education was concerned, namely, the Normal School, in that quaint old historic building, 'Moray House,' in the Canongate, Edinburgh.

I have mentioned the loft over our school, which was used by 'Creeshie Pow' as a sort of storehouse in which to stow the various nondescript offerings from the parents of his pupils, many of whom chose to commute the payment of quarterly or half-yearly fees by contributions in kind. Thus, the miller, being short of cash, might send a sack of meal. Some of the smaller cottar tenants would send a sack or two of potatoes; a great load of peats might take the place of money, and I have known even wool and yarn to be exchanged for pothooks and arithmetic.

The dominie had rather a keen eye to the main chance, and on the occasion which I wish to describe, the loft was pretty full of a miscellaneous assortment of farm produce and other oddments. The tyrant of our little republic impounded with relentless severity anything in the nature of toys, fruit, or sweetmeats, which any scholar was ill-advised enough to allow to come within reach of his vision during school hours. It was an open secret to us that these impounded treasures were bestowed upon a couple of nephews, whom we suspected of acting occasionally as informers upon the rest of us boys. The top of the master's desk had at this time become quite crowded with an array of tops and marbles, apples, oranges, sweetmeats of various degrees of stickiness and nastiness, pocket-knives, and dozens of other schoolboy treasures; and it was determined by some of the daring spirits that an effort should be made to retransfer these treasures back to the rightful owners. Our plans were accordingly laid. I was selected as 'Bell-the-Cat' for this particular venture, and, accordingly, I was smuggled into the

barrel of shavings by the boys, and having been carefully covered up I waited with beating heart until 'the skule had skailed' and the master had locked up. When I heard his retreating footsteps I cautiously thrust my 'touzled' head through the dusty shavings, and being encouraged by a reassuring tap, tap, given by my confederates on the small window in the back wall of the school, I emerged from my hiding-place, undid the catch of the window, and helped to pull in my three or four coadjutors in this daring enterprise.

We soon made a clean sweep of the head of the master's desk, transferring its varied contents into a stout leather schoolbag, which we had provided for the purpose. Then, being further nerved by each other's presence, and by the immunity which had thus far attended our mischievous adventure, we waxed bolder, and determined to signalise the occasion by a deed of extra audacity which would cover our names with glory, as we thought, and hand down our fame to succeeding generations. I am afraid that to my fertile brain must be due the credit or discredit of what followed. We were consumed with an irresistible desire to see what the dominie kept in the loft, and so, putting a form on one of the desks we reached up to the thole-pin which kept the loft folding-door in position (you may remember it opened downwards), and we were soon within the mysterious apartment, dimmed with dust and cobwebs, and behold! the store of potatoes, etc., which the provident dominie had accumulated for his winter consumption, lay revealed to our excited gaze. A very wicked thought now sug-

gested itself to me, which I communicated to my companions, and they at once proceeded to elaborate it, and act upon it. We removed the restraining board which kept the potatoes in position, and arranged the heap in such a way that the smallest disturbance would cause the whole mass to descend into the schoolroom if the trap-door was opened. Then, getting back, we pushed up the folding-door, put in the pin, which one of the boys by this time had half sawn through with a little pocket saw he had discovered in one of the knives which we had rescued from the desk; next, tying a piece of whipcord to the wooden thole-pin, we led this artfully along the wall, securing it in its place by bent pins and tackets, until the free end dangled down over the dim corner where the barrel of shavings generally stood. Next morning the school met in unwonted solemn silence; the dominie recited the usual opening prayer; and then with portentous manner, and ominous frown on his face, he demanded to know who it was that had dared to enter the schoolroom in his absence, and steal—as he called it—the accumulated spoils which had graced his inkstained desk. Of course there was no reply, until at length the silence was broken by the piping reedy treble of one of the nephews aforesaid, who tremulously whimpered out that he had seen so and so, naming myself and companions, coming out of the school by the back window on the previous evening. Naturally we were at once summoned up, and expected to get a terrific dose of the tawse; but we had prepared our counter-demonstration. To one of our trusty comrades we had entrusted the secret of the pin and trap-door; and just as I was ordered to out-

stretch my hand, while the hundred children gazed with dilated eyeballs and pent-up breath at the dreaded dominie, a sharp click was heard, followed by the downfall of the trap-door, and then came a perfect avalanche of potatoes, peats, flour, and meal slap into the midst of the yelling, startled scholars, which completely diverted the attention of the astonished master, and allowed the culprits to make their escape. The result, so far as I was concerned, was a pathetic appeal to my father to exercise his paternal authority, and the confession of 'Creeshie Pow's' utter inability to keep me in anything like order. Thus ended my experiences of our village school.

CHAPTER VIII

Our Village Characters: their Mental Attitude—Village Poet—Specimens of his Muse—Rob Osal', the Flesher—Daft Jamie—Willie Burness—Willie Hood—'Sneeshin' on the Cheap'—Robbie Welsh—Peter M'Kenzie—Anecdotes.

Our village, like most Scottish villages of the time before the revolutionary epoch of railways, electricity, and steam had set in, contained many quaint and strongly-marked individualities. The old types are disappearing fast, and the cosmopolitanism of the age tends ever more and more to repress individuality of character and reduce all classes of society to a dull, uninteresting uniformity, which is very depressing at times as one indulges in reminiscences of the vanished order. No doubt rural manners were uncouth and even coarse, if viewed from the modern standpoint; but if there was a lack of polish, it was more than made up by the fearless honesty, the self-respecting independence, and the sincerity which underlay both speech and action among these hardy village-folks. In matters intellectual and theological there was the keenest conflict of opinion and belief; but in political and social matters there was often a wonderful unanimity, and a dogged tenacity of purpose, in resisting any

attempt to coerce the popular judgment, which the people inherited from a long ancestry, whose testimony for liberty of conscience and freedom of opinion had many a time been sealed with their blood. The prevalent attitude of mind was doubtless parochial, intensely local—narrow in fact—and stupid prejudices were not uncommon; but there was, too, a kindly, neighbourly clannishness which was inexpressibly precious to look back on, when any one found himself far away from the little home circle, and which is, I think, surely peculiar in its persistent intensity to the dwellers in lands where mountains are an ever-present feature in the scenery. The circling girdle of hills which hems in the horizon seems to enclose a little world of its own. Beyond the rugged outline, whose sharp ridges or swelling curves stand out boldly against the sky, there lies an unknown region, the dwellers in which may, or may not, be in harmony with the thought and feeling that prevail among 'oor ain folk'; and so it is exceedingly natural that we should like 'oor ain folk' best. They understand our ways, and we understand theirs. We share common emotions, hopes, and fears: the very changes of the weather and vicissitudes of the seasons affect us in a like manner; and the whirr and rattle and stress of the great currents of life in big cities and in populous centres reach us only in faint, far echoes, bringing with them a sense of disturbance, unrest, and disquiet, rousing indeed but little curiosity, and sending us back to our accustomed round of duty or pleasure with a keener appreciation for the familiar and the homely.

This must have been the mental attitude of many a

small circle of village folk such as ours, prior to this marvellous modern era of daily newspapers, snorting steam-engines, circulating libraries, popular lectures, and the clash and clatter of the factory system. Verily, the century has seen a mighty change. Not only in these and countless other outward embodiments of material progress, but what a change, too, in the very spirit of man — in his modes of thought, in his mental outlook—ay, even in the tricks of his speech—his very gestures, his dress, his social observances and domestic habits.

Our village was undoubtedly, in the days of which I write, a quiet, secluded, old-fashioned place. The elders among the 'folk' were people of strong prejudices, of a most conservative temper, fearlessly independent and outspoken in their criticisms of any innovation, and, be it said with all gentleness, though truth compels the judgment, somewhat narrow-minded and intolerant; while, as I have said, manners were often unrefined, and even coarse.

For this reason, many of the most characteristic sayings and doings of the old rural Scottish life are now absolutely barred from publication by the present altered and elevated standard of propriety; and one is precluded from reproducing by far the larger number of the best illustrations of Scottish wit and humour of the time of our grandfathers, simply on account of the element of coarseness in them, which really meant very little to our outspoken, matter-of-fact, fearlessly frank grand-dads and grand-dames, but which the more refined and fastidious generation of the present artificial era would be shocked and scandalised to hear.

Every village, of course, had its poet. Some parishes had more than one. Poetry is distinctly a national gift of 'oor ain folk'; and though we have only had one Burns, yet the minor singers of Scotland are as numerous as her glens; and the majority even of these humble rustic bards possess some spark of the divine afflatus, which at times glows into a steady, radiant flame, instinct with life and passion, and closely approaching the realm of genuine inspiration and pure poetry. Especially in their descriptions of natural scenery a high standard of excellence is often reached by these humble pilgrims of Parnassus.

I fear that in our village, however, the poetry was not even of this comparatively-elevated type. Such few scraps as have come down to me would seem to argue that the village bards had not modelled their style on Burns, Hogg, or even the Wizard Wattie, but had built their stanzas on the Tate and Brady, or Sternhold and Hopkins pattern.

One old handloom weaver, James Glen, rejoiced in the sobriquet of THE POET *par excellence*. 'Jeems' had beyond a doubt a little of the rhyming faculty; but I fancy the distinguishing title was bestowed on him as much from his peculiarities of dress as from his graces of style. He invariably wore a long blue swallow-tailed coat with brass buttons and high collar, knee-breeches and shoes, and a waistcoat with flap pockets; in fact, he affected the costume in which Burns is most frequently depicted by the artists of his time. 'Jeems' was a quiet, douce, self-contained man. He usually wore a Glengarry cap with long ribbons, and when 'the divine afflawtus' came on him he seemed to walk,

as it were, on stilts, with his long, lean body bent forward, the coat-tails and bonnet-strings streaming behind him; and, with eyes bent on vacancy, he would perambulate among the whins on the muir, and mutter his rhymes to himself till the poetic frenzy abated.

Here is an illustration of his muse from a simple poem on his native village. It is mildly retrospective, as the reader will see, and poetically descriptive. ('Starrie' and Sandie Todd were the rival carriers.) But let the poet speak for himself.

'Aince Aigle village hed nae street,
An' lookit auld an' reekit:
The hooses, to defend the weet,
Wi' strae an' bruim were theekit.

Oor cairriers upon the road—
To Brechin 'Starrie' goes:
And ilka Friday, Sandie Todd
Brings aerrants frae Montrose!

Auld Benjie, he does mak' the gas
Frae coal they ca' the Parrot,
And it alang the pipes doth pass
Through kitchen, room, an' garret.'

From the allusion to Benjie, the gas-man, and other internal evidence, it would seem that the date of this stirring and eloquent fragment would be some time in the fifties, when, for the first time, coal-gas was introduced into the village.

Jeems had a laudable pride in his own powers of versification. He would sometimes come down to the manse when my father was busy preparing his

sermon, and sorely try the minister's patience by maunderings about 'the gift that was in him.' At such times he would say something of this sort:

'Gude day, Maister Inglis.'

'Ah, Jeems! is that you?' my father would cheerfully respond, though with an inward groan.

''Deed is't, Maister Inglis. I've jist been pondering owre some o' the poetic wonders that to the obsairvant e'e are so laivishly spread abroad on ilka hand.'

Here Jeems would extend his fingers, wave his arms, and his 'obsairvant e'e' would roll wildly; while he 'spread himself' in the fashion which, to my father's 'obsairvant e'e,' meant an infliction of some 'sma' bit thing o' my ain, meenister.'

'Ye see, Maister Inglis,' he would say, 'I hiv a theeory that a wheen o' thae great poets that ordinar' fowk gang on aboot sae muckle are often wrang a'thegether in their w'y o' treatin' their subjeck. There's a lot o' mere haivers often written aboot luve an' weemen and the great an' majestick sichts an' soonds o' naitur; but losh bless me! Mr. Inglis, maist onybuddy cud write poetry aboot sic like things as that. My ain consaits gang mair in the lowly an' humble paths o' ordinar' ilka day expeeriences, sir; an' I dinna' see but what the gowden touch o' a poet's imawgination suld be used to brichten up and elluminate, as it were, even vera ordinar' and maist onlikely subjecks to the mere unobsairvant e'e.'

My poor father, looking wistfully at his manuscript, could only bow his meek acquiescence. Off Jeems would start again:

'Yes, sir. Jist for instance, obsairve the hen noo—

the common domestic hen, sir. Ye widna think thare wis much inspirawtion aboot the common hen, noo, wid ye?'

'No indeed, I would not, Jeems,' the minister would say.

'Ah! but that's jist far ye mak' the mistak'' pursued the poet. 'Noo here's a sma' bit thing o' my ain, jist cuist aff in a moment of sudden insicht as it were. An it's a' aboot a common hen.

'The hen she is a usefu' beast,
She walks about the yaird also!
An' sometimes lays an egg or two,
Or three or four, or more, or so!'

But just then, fortunately for my father's peace of mind, and his reputation for patience and courtesy, a ring came to the door,—a fresh visitor was announced, and for the time poor poet Glen had to keep the remainder of his 'pome' for his own inward delectation. I do not know if ever the rest of the stately verses, 'aboot the common domestic hen,' were poured into my father's ears, but I think I have given enough to show that our village possessed a poet of no ordinary calibre.

Our only butcher, called 'a flesher' ordinarily, was a very old man, Robert Oswald, pronounced Osal. He had no regular shop, for the village folk as a rule did not go in for much butcher-meat, unless it was some of their own killing. But once or twice a year Rob's services were in great request, when a Martinmas coo had to be slain, or the annual slaughter of fatted swine took place. At such times Rob was an object of awe

to the boys, with his striped apron and leather wallet full of fearsome whittles. It was said by some fastidious critics that the only objection they had to Rob as a dresser was the unfortunate propensity he had to plentifully bespatter with snuff the swinish carcases on which he exercised his art. Rob's hand was shaky, and so a lot of sneeshin' never reached his nose, which it ought to have done.

Of course we had oor 'naiteral.' There was one poor shambling creature that used to rock his emaciated body to and fro, with most pathetic persistency, all day long, basking in the sun at the door of the poorhouse. He was known as 'Daft Jamie,' and, as is often the case with these poor creatures, a gleam of shrewd wit, at times crystallised in a telling phrase, would show that his powers of observation were not so limited as some might imagine.

On one occasion, so the story goes, some well-meaning teetotaller had been applying his persuasive powers on a 'droothy' subject who had been 'looking on the whisky when it was strong,' at the neighbouring 'Star Inn.'

The temperance advocate, seeking to 'point his moral,' had appealed to the spectacle of poor 'Daft Jamie,' and said to the subject of his lecture that he was really worse than poor 'Daft Jamie'; 'for,' said he, 'YOU have yer wits aboot ye, and yet ye tak' to drink that "steals yer wits," and makes ye as daft as that poor, feckless creature over there!'

Now, it was popularly reported in the village that the unfortunate inmates of the poorhouse were not only denied such luxuries as drink, but were even stinted in their proper modicum of daily food.

Wishing to clinch his illustration, the well-meaning temperance reformer, having by this time drawn near, with his 'shocking example' in tow, to poor Jamie, turned to the idiot, and said: 'I'm sure ye was niver fou, wis ye, Jamie?'

Not a little to his discomfiture Jamie's dull eye brightened immediately, and nodding his head several times, with a deep chuckle of inward satisfaction he patted his stomach, and said: 'Ay, aince.'

'What!' said the teetotaller, 'ye have been fou, have ye; what in the world did ye get fou on?'

'Cauld mutton,' said Jamie.

His rendering of 'fou' had evident application to fulness of provender, and not fulness of drink.

Poor Willie Burness was another of these half-witted, harmless creatures; although sometimes poor Willie, when badgered by bad boys, would have a frightful access of passion, in which he was capable of doing serious harm to the objects of his rage. When anyone thus incurred his animosity, his usual plan was to write his name in sprawling characters on a piece of paper, after which, inserting this into a cleft stick, he would proceed to the river-side, and immerse the paper; the idea in his poor clouded brain being that he was thus drowning the object of his dislike. He had a most loving regard for my father; but I am afraid my mother was not such a favourite with him, as she certainly had less patience with 'Willie,' who could wheedle a coin or a packet of snuff out of my father occasionally, but never succeeded in softening the obduracy of my mother's heart. So Willie would some-

times say very pungent things about her, having reference more especially to her powers of speech. Indeed on more than one occasion he hinted that my mother could occupy the pulpit to greater advantage than my father, so far at least as that faculty was concerned.

Old Willie Hood was another character who used to haunt the precincts of the chief inn of the village, and did little odd jobs for travellers, such as holding their horses, etc. He also was a perfect slave to the habit of snuffing; and his mode of replenishing his snuff 'mull,' if somewhat objectionable, was decidedly ingenious. Whenever anyone whom he knew to be a snuff-taker came along, he would at once ask for a 'sneeshin',' and of course his request would immediately be complied with. Taking the well-filled snuff-box, he would turn his back on his entertainer, and hastily cram both his nostrils as full as they could hold with the pungent aromatic powder. Handing back the half-emptied box, he would then shamble off as quickly as he could, and anyone who followed him round the nearest corner would see him stealthily take his own empty, battered box from his capacious pocket, after which, holding it under his packed nostrils, he would tap his olfactory organ on both sides, shaking the purloined powder into his own box. Thus, in the course of an interview or two, he would manage to get quite enough snuff to last him for some time.

I remember that once, when I had come home from college, I met Willie on my way up to the muir to enjoy a game of golf.

'Eh, Mr. Jeems, is that you?' he said. 'Losh, man, ye're lookin' weel!' And then with an unctuous cough, and conciliatory ogle in his watery eye, he said: 'D'ye ken, that last time yer brither Bob was here, he gae me a saxpence to buy sneeshin'; that's no beggin', is't?'

Another well-known character was a man by the name of 'Robbie Welsh.' He belonged to well-to-do people, and was noted for his pawky sayings and shrewd keen-wittedness. One of his brothers was a prosperous tenant-farmer, while another was a major in the army who, during the Crimean war, met his death on the battlefield. My father met Robbie one day, and wishing to get news of the absent soldier, he asked 'Weel, Robbie, and how's the major?'

Robbie, full of importance at having such news to tell, said, 'Dord! Mr. Inglis,'—(he always spoke through his nose)—'he got a bāal through his guts, and dord, man, he dee'd!'

On one occasion Robbie, during his perambulations, came up to the house of a well-known farmer in Lethnot who was notoriously fond of the 'cratur,'—that is, when he could get it, for his careful, managing daughter, who kept house for him, took care when at home to put him on an allowance. Once a week, however, the old chap would insist on driving in to Brechin market, where, away from the watchful eye of his trusty daughter, he always managed to get a good skinful of 'usquebaugh,' in company with a coterie of cronies afflicted with like proclivities.

Now on this occasion the old farmer, seeing Robbie

approaching the house, inwardly rejoiced, thinking that for very hospitality's sake his 'dauchter Meg' must perforce produce the bottle for Robbie's delectation; as for very shame's sake she could not refuse her father a drink at the same time to keep Robbie company. Meg, however, knew perfectly well that if once the bottle was produced, they would not leave it until its contents were exhausted, so that, in spite of her father's appealing look, she gave Robbie a frigid welcome, and producing scones, cheese, and fresh butter, planted down a huge jug of clear cold water, with a gesture that plainly said, 'That is all the drink you'll get here to-day.'

Robbie knew his host's weakness perfectly well, and, being shrewd and keen-witted, he also knew that Meg 'ruled the roost' in the farmer's establishment.

With a sickly attempt at gaiety, the old farmer pressed him to eat; and pouring out a tumblerful of the fine spring water, he said with well-simulated hospitable *empressement*:

'Weel, Robbie! hoo did ye like that?'

'Dord!' said Robbie, with a look of deep significance, and in tones of genuine disgust, 'Dord, Maister ——, fu' did ye like it yersel'?'

Poor —— when he got the chance only 'likit it owre weel'; and one night the poor old fellow tumbled over the bridge on his way home from market and broke his neck.

One of these quaint old-fashioned village characters, named Peter M'Kenzie, had been in the service, for nearly a lifetime, of Mr. Louis, a well-known laird near Stirling. Several good stories are told of Peter, and as

they serve to illustrate this particular phase of the old servant question I have jotted them down here.

Peter's one special duty (he had grown old and gray in the one service) was to take charge of a very fine well-bred bull, and he held all other kinds of stock in supreme contempt. One day the Laird, in Peter's hearing, had been admiring and praising some fine sheep, and Peter, who took this as a sort of slight to the bull, began in a querulous, depreciatory sort of way to decry and belittle the sheep. 'Feech, Maister John,' he said, 'I cannot see fat ye find in such brutes as sheep. They're jist a wheen clorty craeters, an' naebody 'll buy clorty brutes like them. An' forbye, no game 'll bide where they have been; an' indeed they're jist pairfeckly useless.'

The Laird good-naturedly rallied him, saying: 'Oh, come now, Peter, how about the mutton?'

'Weel,' grumbled Peter, 'there's the mutton, nae doot; but forbye the mutton they're jist useless!'

'Ay, man,' still pursued his master, 'an' what aboot the wool?'

'Aweel, aweel, there's the 'oo; but forbye the 'oo an' forbye the mutton, they're useless brutes.'

An unfortunate stranger excited him to anger once by incautiously asking if the bull was not bad-tempered and vicious. Indeed, he was notoriously so But Peter could allow no slur to be cast on his idol. Thus he summarised the matter: 'Weel, it's no sic an ill-guided brute, sir. I'm no sayin' but what noo an' than it micht mebbe kill a man, jist by w'y o' divairshun like; but 'od, sir, ye ken it's but a bull!' How thoroughly Scotch the thrawnness!

CHAPTER IX

Village Occupations—The Handloom Weavers—Merchants and Merchanties—Various Types—Davit Elshender—A Story of the Egg Market—How Mrs. Paitterson turned the Tables—A Stingy Couple—Taking the Pledge—Strong Language—Story of Rev. Mr. Don—John Buchan's Prayer—A Banquet to the Laird—A Dear Denner—Effects of mixing Drinks—Drinking Habits of the Time.

Besides the usual assortment of ordinary handicraftsmen,—that is, wrichts, stonemasons, quarrymen, blacksmiths, shoemakers, saddlers, etc.,—there was a considerable settled population in the village, consisting of families more or less connected with agricultural pursuits, and attached in some way or other to the various farms scattered through the parish. In addition to these there were three or four 'factories,' as they were called, but differing very much indeed from the vision conjured up by the word as applied to modern establishments, where hundreds, nay sometimes thousands, of wan-faced operatives pass their lives as slaves to the modern machinery Jagganath.

Our village 'factories' were long, low, thatched-roofed tenements, with the natural clay for the floor. They were occupied by handloom weavers, each having

to pay a small pittance as rent, and having to fit up his own loom and work quite independently of each other. The noisy click-clack of the busy shuttles sounded without intermission from the gray dawn of early morn till far into the night. At any time these village factories were dingy and squalid-looking. The air was laden with floating particles of fluff from the webs, known locally as 'caddis,' and at night a few hanging oil 'crusies' simply served to make darkness visible. The weavers were generally either decrepit old men or bouncing lasses, whose calling could never be mistaken, owing to the fluffy particles of 'caddis' which clung to their hair—for they never wore bonnets —and many of them, poor things, owing to the unhealthy surroundings, frequently fell victims to that dreaded scourge of old-time Scottish villages, 'consumption.'

These various grades might be said to constitute the substantial groundwork of village society, and next above them came the traders or shopkeepers. These invariably rejoiced in the high-sounding appellation of 'merchants.' No matter if a man only sold bools and peeries, with an occasional stick of 'candy glue,' he was still a merchant, or possibly the village folk would call him a 'merchantie' in contradistinction to his more wealthy *confrère*, who boasted a large stock of drapery and grocery, and had the legend over his door, 'Licensed to sell Tea, Snuff, and Tobacco.'

I have heard my father speak of two trade announcements he saw in Aberdeen during his student days. One was in the shop window of a little merchantie, and was to this effect—'Fresh butter and eggs laid here

daily by Betsy Smith.' The other ran thus—'Peats, Coals, and other groceries sold here.'

Our chief merchant was a wealthy old gentleman named Robert Buchan, who combined the offices of Postmaster and Registrar with his commercial pursuits. In the popular estimation Robert was credited with the possession of great wealth; and no doubt he sometimes acted the part of banker to many a small farmer and struggling artisan, and in many respects he was a very enterprising and estimable man.

His sister, Miss Buchan, kept house for him, and surely no one was ever more deserving of the grateful affection of the young people who were honoured periodically with invitations to a regular set 'tea-pairty.' Miss Buchan's hospitality was of the most generous kind. The jams and 'jeelies' with which she regaled our youthful appetites were of the highest expressions of culinary skill.

John Carr was another of our merchants for whom we had the most affectionate regard. He was a great friend of my father's, and every morning when the minister went up to get his newspaper at John's shop, he indulged in a pleasant chat with his trusty friend. John was generally famous among the boys for giving the largest 'neivefu' of sweeties in exchange for a penny, of any merchant in the village. Poor John still lives; but alas! for many years his once clear intellect has been clouded, and life has been a long-drawn drama of suffering for the dear old, kindly man.

One old wifie, Jean Kinear, was famous as a purveyor of the delicacy known farther south as 'gundy,' and in Edinburgh among the 'keelies' as 'claggum' or stick-

jaw, but which our village boys always called 'black-man.' In reality it was simply treacle toffy. It was dreadfully sticky and very toothsome, and on the whole must have been very innocuous, as it was never forbidden by the maternal lawgiver.

Our pet aversion among the shopkeepers was a snivelling, watery-eyed, 'lamiter mannie,' whom I shall call 'Davit Elshender.'

Davit was a voluble, plausible, unreliable little humbug. He was greedy, mean, and unscrupulous in little things, and tried to assume a jaunty air of sociability, which, however, was quite foreign to his real nature and sat ill upon him. His wife Meg, a great, gaunt, hollow-cheeked woman, with iron-gray corkscrew ringlets and projecting buck teeth, was a fit consort for the tallow-faced Davit, who, doubtless, must have been a victim to dyspepsia. He was too mean to drink at his own expense, but his nose always had a fiery tip to it. His favourite attitude was to stand behind his counter with his two broad thumbs pressed thereon, fingers expanded, black linen apron tucked up in his belt, and there, with a black velvet skull-cap covering his bald 'pow,' he would expatiate in the most voluble way to any chance customer who might be in the shop, and dogmatically assert himself on every subject that came uppermost, be it philosophy, religion, politics, the price of 'herrin',' or the treatment of infantile ailments. It did not matter to Davit what topic came uppermost, he was competent to give a dogmatic opinion on anything 'in the heavens above, the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth.' He met his match one day, however and it fell out this way. The tinkle of the little bell

behind the door summoned him from the back shop one morning, and he at once assumed his favourite attitude with thumb and fingers extended on the counter, and welcomed the intruder thus :

'Ay, ay! and so that's you yersel', Mistress Paitterson? Losh, but it's a lang time sin' I've seen ye. Ay, ay! and fat's brocht ye sae far doon the village th' day, Mistress Paitterson?' For Davit well knew that he was no great favourite with the quiet, demure, farmer's wife whom he was now accosting, and that she generally bestowed her patronage on one of his rivals farther up the street. The woman he addressed was a quiet, decent, tidy body, with neat black mitts on her hands, a well-fitting but much-worn beaded cloak over her simple gown, and a frayed, rusty silk bonnet on her head, which bore evident marks of having been turned many a time during the twenty years or so that it had been in wear.

Mistress Paitterson was the wife of a small farmer 'owre the watter,' and was a successful breeder of poultry and purveyor of eggs, as Davit well knew. As a matter of fact she was accustomed to sell her eggs to another of the storekeepers ; but this week she had come rather late to market, and found that her usual purchaser had bought all he required. So in a very quiet, gentle way she told Davit that she had brought some eggs to sell. Davit at once started off at score.

'Ay, ay, an' so ye've brocht yer eggs, have ye? Well, I will say this, Mistress Paitterson, that ye've aye the bonniest an' biggest eggs in a' the pairis' ; but ye see there's a michty swash o' eggs comin' intae the market i' the noo, an' the fac' is, I'll no be able tae gie

ye mair nor tenpence a dizzen, an' I'm sure they're well worth mair.'

Then, seeing a slight shade coming over the quiet little woman's countenance, but having pretty well guessed the circumstances which led her to proffer *him* her wares—knowing in fact that she was not likely to find a buyer elsewhere, and, wishing to snap up a bargain, he bolstered up his position with a totally unnecessary lie, saying:

'Ye see, Mistress Paitterson, the supply is greater than the demand th' noo, for we canna even sell eggs in Brechin; and so the mairchants hae haen a CONFERENCE,'—lingering over this word with great unction,—'and we've a' agreed that we canna gie mair than tenpence a dizzen for eggs th' noo.'

The good woman knew just enough of the circumstances of the local market to accept this rather plausible deliverance; and as her basket was heavy and the day was hot, she made up her mind to accept the offer, which as it happened was much under the real value of the eggs. So, with a sigh, she handed over the heavy market-basket, with its clean, white cover, and Davit, with a smirk of satisfaction in his beady little porcine eyes, took the eggs into the back shop, came back and handed her the ten shillings for twelve dozen. After an immaterial little purchase, the good lady took her departure, while Davit communicated to Meg that 'he had jist got some grand eggs frae Mistress Paitterson at a considerable reduction on the rael market-price.'

Now the little woman had not gone far before she met a neighbour, and on an exchange of notes she dis-

covered that Davit had got the better of her, and that the other 'mairchants' in fact were paying the usual price. By and by she came back to Davit's shop, but with quite an unmoved countenance and the same self-restrained, quiet manner, she made another little purchase, and asked Davit if he would be prepared to take the same quantity of eggs next week. Davit's heart leaped within him, as he told her with much effusiveness that he would be a regular buyer for all she could bring; and again lamenting that the 'conference of the mairchants' prevented him from giving a higher price for 'sic bonnie eggs,' which indeed were the best in 'a' the pairis',' he bade her good-day, and the little woman departed.

Now she had made up her mind to be 'even with Davit'; so during the week she collected all the pigeon and bantam eggs and the smallest eggs from young pullets, that she could lay her hands on; and having carefully packed them in sweet-scented hay, and covered the basket carefully over with the snowy cloth, she again sallied forth to take her satisfaction out of him. No sooner had she entered the shop than she was greeted with the same volubility, and having in her quiet way parried the eager questionings of the red-nosed grocer, she said:

'I suppose ye're nae gie'in ony mair for the eggs this week, Mr. Elshender?'

'Weel ye see, Mistress Paitterson, I hae tae abide by the deceesion o' the CONFERENCE, altho' I'm no sayin' but what yer eggs raelly deserve a shillin' a dizzen at the vera least, but I canna gie ye mair than the tenpence.'

'Aweel,' says she, with a sigh, 'I suppose I maun jist be daein' wi' what I can get in the meantime.' And then in an off-handed sort of way, she said, 'There's jist twal' dizzen, Mr. Elshender. That 'll be ten shillin's; an' as I want tae gang doon the village a bitty, ye can pay me i' the noo, an' I'll leave the auld creel wi' ye, and ye can coont the eggs at yer leisure.'

Davit, inwardly congratulating himself on another bargain, and never suspecting any trick, handed her the money, and she went her way.

You can imagine the consternation of the thwarted rogue when he discovered the trick that had been played upon him. He fumed and raged and snorted, and poured the vials of his wrath upon his luckless shop-boy, even venturing to say some sharp things to 'lantern-jawed' Meg, his wife; but that was too dangerous a course to pursue at any great length, and so, fuming and fretting, he watched for the re-appearance of 'Mistress Paitterson.' That decent, quiet body, still with a demure look and unmoved countenance, at length made her appearance. At once Davit opened out in indignant protestation.

'What sort o' a trick is this ye've played on me, Mistress Paitterson? Thae's only doos' an' bantams' eggs ye've brocht me this week. Losh bless me, eggs like thae's no worth saxpence a dizzen! Ye sharely canna be meanin' tae tak' guid siller for eggs like thae?'

To this outburst the sly little woman quietly responded: 'Fat's the maitter wi' the eggs, Maister Elshender? The eggs are a' richt.'

'Toots, haivers, wumman!' snorted the enraged

shopkeeper ; 'I'm tellin' ye thae's naethin' but doos' eggs.'

A gleam of suppressed glee sparkled in the eyes of the quiet, self-contained, little woman, as, slowly taking up her basket and cloth, she dropped a semi-curtsey and said :

'Weel, ye see, Maister Elshender, the fac' is, that oor hens hae haen *their conference* i' the back yaird ; and they jist made up their minds that it wisna worth their while tae rax themsel's for eggs at ten-pence a dizzen.'

What Davit said when Mistress Paitterson retired, had better be left unrecorded.

I am not sure but it was this couple, Davit and Meg, of whom an anecdote is recorded as follows : They had never made any return to the numerous friends at whose houses hospitality had often been dispensed and accepted by the close-fisted couple. A hint having been given to Meg on one occasion that a return 'tea-pairty' would only be the correct thing, she explained the situation thus : 'Weel than, ye see it's jist this w'y ; I've aye been wantin' to hae a tea an' a dance, but Davit hauds oot for a denner an' a drink, an' so atween the twa o's we've ne'er made up oor minds which it's tae be.'

Neither 'the tea' nor 'the denner' ever came off.

Here is yet one more story of the temperance lecturer sort, which we may call The Letter and the Spirit.

An old 'wifie' who had a weakness for whisky had been prevailed upon to take the pledge. Shortly afterwards, she called upon a rather 'drouthie neebor,'

who was not aware of her visitor's reformation. The bottle was at once, as usual, produced, and the recent convert to temperance was sorely tempted. She made, however, a gallant effort to remain true to principle, and holding up deprecating hands, she said:

'Na, thank ye, Mistress Mitchell. I've taen the pledge. I've made a solemn vow not tae pit han' or lip tae gless again'; but then seeing Mistress Mitchell was about to remove the spirits, she hesitatingly said, surrendering to the subtle tempter: 'I daur say ef ye pit a wee drappie in a tea-cup, I could maybe tak' it.'

As illustrating the tendency on the part of old Scottish people to indulge in a strong combination of adjectives, the following is rather good.

Mrs. Don of Ballownie, a fine farm in my father's parish, happened to be speaking of a certain Sandie ——, who had been formerly one of the farm hands, but who, having gone to Farnell, had created a sensation by arranging an elopement with a young local heiress, which had just barely escaped being brought to a successful consummation. The old lady, who had been pondering over the news, at length opened her mind to the family circle in the following words: 'Weel, I dinna see fat she cud hae seen i' Sandie ——, a nasty, low, abominable, barefaced, sweerin', vulgar, ill-brocht-up brute.'

Her son, the Rev. James Don, who lately died in Victoria, where he had long been an honoured minister, told me the above, and also related an amusing episode of his own early preaching days. Indeed, it was but the third time he had mounted the pulpit. The scene

was in old Mr. Paton's church, in the pretty village of Fettercairn. When the young preacher, after giving out the psalm, had taken his first rapid survey of the congregation, he noticed two finely-dressed gentlemen in a secluded pew, dressed in superfine broadcloth suits, and adorned with white clerical neckties. One was a venerable-looking old gentleman, with silvery hair; the other young, with a rather aristocratic and refined look. It then being the height of the tourist season, Mr. Don put the two gentlemen down at once as some travelling English rector and his curate, and he felt very nervous in the presence of what he took to be such critics. In the evening the same couple occupied the same seat, and the minister underwent another ordeal of inward anxiety. When he came to disrobe, however, in the vestry, he asked the beadle who the two distinguished clerics might be.

'Och, there wis nae meenister i' the kirk, sir,' said the beadle.

'Yes there was,' said Mr. Don; 'they were here in the morning too;' then he described them.

'Hoots, sir,' said the old beadle, 'thae wis nae meenisters; that wis jist Dancie Fettis an' his son—the twa dancin' maisters fae Brechin.'

Another good story of Mr. Don's had relation to a simple resident of the hamlet of Inchbare, named John Buchan. John was undoubtedly 'gey gowkit,' or what would be called in the colonies 'a shingle short.' He had an idea, however, that he had a great gift of utterance in prayer, and his one ambition was to be asked to lead the devotions at the weekly prayer meeting. Of course those who

knew his weakness never had asked him; but one day Mr. Don, who was doing duty for my father, responded to poor John Buchan's mute appeal, and asked him to offer up prayer. The poor fellow began in a fashion which soon showed Mr. Don the dreadful mistake he had made. He floundered and boggled and got involved in appalling labyrinths of words, getting ever more and more confused. His perplexity at length reached a climax, and the equanimity of the meeting was wholly upset, when John uttered a petition that the worshipping people 'noo assembled micht a' be made like the deevils that entered intae the swine!'

One day old Mrs. Don and a neighbour, Mrs. Davidson, had been cudgelling their brains trying to remember the word 'respirator.' They had described it as that instrument 'that fowk hae owre their moos in stormy weather tae keep the wind fae their lungs.' At length Mrs. Don fancied she had solved the puzzle, and triumphantly exclaimed, 'Hoots, bless me, it's a Valpariso!'

Shortly after the death of old Lord Panmure, and when Fox Maule, his son, reigned in his stead, it was determined by the tenantry to tender him a banquet in honour of his having succeeded to the estates. Great preparations were made, and it was resolved that the dinner would most fitly be held at the old Castle of Edzell, the ancient seat of the lordly Lindsays, who used to hold feudal sway over all the surrounding country. The castle is a picturesque and most interesting ruin—one of the most

complete and well-preserved relics of that troublous fighting time, the annals of which make up so much of our national history. An enormous marquee was erected, and the numerous tenantry, from a dozen parishes and scores of glens and straths, mustered thick on the festive occasion. My father, though caring little for such gatherings, had received certain consideration from the new landlord, who was looked on besides as one of the pillars of the Free Church; and so, in the dual capacity of tenant-farmer and minister, he attended the feast. My readers can easily imagine the scene. It was the ordinary bucolic scramble. There were the usual hurrying crowds of perspiring waiters and the usual bewildered mob of small farmers getting in everybody's way, and not knowing where to sit or what to do. One small landholder from the Glen, Sandie Eggo, had at length got seated between two burly low-country farmers, who, quite ignoring the meek, shrinking Sandie, cracked their jokes, and showed a familiarity with the black-coated waiters which, to the abashed 'cottar-fairmer,' was most impressive. In vain did the hungry man cast imploring looks at the fussy, perspiring servants. In vain did he endeavour to catch the eye of any one whom he knew. The hum of conversation increased; the clatter of knives and glasses waxed louder and more loud; dish after dish was whipped up from the table and vanished with conjuror-like celerity, and still Sandie, who had paid his full guinea for his ticket, sat unnoticed and unattended to. At length, in desperation, he seized a spoon and attacked the dish in front of

him, which happened to be a dish of mashed turnips, and with this he managed to stay the pangs of his hunger. By and by, after the speeches, my father, strolling around, asked Sandie if it had not been a most successful demonstration, and inquired how he had liked the grand dinner.

'Graund denner!' growled Sandie; 'ye can ca't graund gin ye like, but I can only say that the fodder's michty dear at ane-and-twenty guid shillin's for a wheen chappit neeps, no fit to set doon till a stirk.'

Another reminiscence of the same banquet my father used to tell, as illustrative of the drinking habits of the time. The subject on this occasion was a pretty well-to-do sheep-farmer from Lethnot, a member of my father's congregation, and a kindly, honest man, but extremely retiring and bashful. He was a bachelor, and quite accustomed to the trying ordeal of even 'a term market,' without losing his head. But banquets were not in his way; and he unfortunately got separated from his associates, and was set down between an eminent solicitor from Edinburgh and the *debonair* factor of a neighbouring nobleman. He thus found himself in a most uncongenial neighbourhood, and though his table companions treated him with a little more courtesy and consideration than fell to the lot of Sandie Eggo, farther down, yet poor B—— (that was the name of his farm) felt utterly out of his element and ill at ease.

His neighbours were not long in noticing this, and wishing to set him more at ease plied him with champagne—a drink that B—— had never before tasted; and under the stimulating influences of the

sparkling wine, B—— soon began to get a little more reconciled to his surroundings. When the time came for the speechifying, he, nerved by the unwonted exhilaration of what he looked on with contempt as 'thin fizzin' stuff,' took advantage of a favourable opportunity to escape from the somewhat oppressive neighbourhood of the solicitor and factor, and got seated among a coterie of hard-drinking farmers, and at once began to make up for lost time by an assiduous application to the 'het watter and speerits,' which had by this time made their appearance on the table.

What with the champagne, the unwonted excitement, and a rather quicker assimilation of his toddy than usual, poor B——, for probably the first time in his life, began to feel overcome by what he had taken. As a matter of fact he had arrived at that stage known to Scotch connoisseurs as 'greetin' fou.' There the poor man sat, weeping copious tears; and my father just then happening to come up, he asked B—— with real concern what ailed him.

'Ah, Maister Inglis,' said B——, 'I'm failin'—I'm failin' fast; I'm no lang for this warl'!'

'Oh nonsense,' said the minister, now seeing what was the matter; 'don't be foolish, man! you're hale and hearty yet; you're just a little excited, that's all. You should try and get away home.'

'Ah, meenister,' still persisted the lachrymose farmer, 'I'm clean dune, sir—I'm clean failed.'

'What nonsense, man! what makes ye think that?'

'Ah, sir,' said B—— with intense pathos, 'I ken

weel I'm failin'. As fac's deith, sir, I've only haen aucht tumblers, an' I'm fou, sir—I'm fou!'

The idea of being overcome with only eight tumblers was too much for poor B——'s comprehension; but the story is a good illustration of what was thought a fair quantity for a sitting at that time.

Indeed, there was a small circle of real seasoned topers in the village, whose united consumption at 'The Panmure Arms' of an evening would somewhat astonish many of those who are considered intemperate men nowadays. When the banker, the Auld Kirk dominie, and half a dozen of the wealthier farmers and bonnet lairds, used to meet, they never separated till 'the wee short 'oors ayont the twal'.' Many a night, after seeing the banker home, the auld dominie would reach his own domicile on all fours—his track, devious yet distinct, being well defined in the stour of the village street next morning. The schoolboys knew it well, and knew also that the 'tawse' would not be idle that day, in consequence of the deep potations of the previous night.

Most of that convivial company did, in sad and literal truth, eventually drink themselves to death.

CHAPTER X

My Mother's Folk—Montrose Skippers and the Baltic Trade—Presents from Abroad—A Partial Eclipse—The Homespun Era—Basket Mary—A Rigorous Caste System—'Tea-pairties'—Wullie D——'s Hoose-warming—A Sma' Gless—A Heartless Drucken Husband—Painter Tam—Anecdotes.

My mother's folk were from Montrose. Her maiden name was 'Brand,' and nearly all her people were identified with the then thriving shipping interest of that quaint old seaport town. Her forefathers were doubtless of Danish origin, the name Brand, pronounced 'Braun,' figuring extensively in old Danish and Norwegian records; and for many generations back the Brands could trace their genealogy as always a seafaring people.

My mother was one of a large family of girls, all well educated and versed in the fashionable accomplishments of the period. She could paint well, was a good musician, and in fact to her dying day had a sweet, melodious voice. When the tall, good-looking country minister from Lochlee courted her, she was accounted one of the leading belles of Montrose, which was indeed no slight distinction. Three of her brothers were masters and owners of their own vessels, then con-

sidered to be taut, well-built, roomy schooners or barques, each of them engaged in the Baltic trade. I can well remember the awesome delight with which I first made acquaintance with the—to a schoolboy's mind—romantic realm of adventure represented by one of these old, foul-smelling, dingy-cabined grain-carriers, which then formed part of the numerous fleet trading between the east coast of Scotland and the Baltic ports. No doubt they would be called 'tubs' nowadays, with their gloomy cabins, their steep, breakneck companion-ways, high unwieldy bulwarks, bluff bows, and bewildering network of running gear. But many a battle was waged with northern gale and treacherous icepack in these lumbering old crafts; and they formed a splendid school for the young and daring spirits who there learned the lessons of hardihood and endurance which have secured the supremacy of the seas for the navies of Britain.

The Baltic skipper of the day was an individuality *sui generis*. His genus is now well-nigh obsolete. My old uncle Sandie, who was for some decades harbour-master of Montrose, was a typical specimen. Short, squat, broad-shouldered, bandy-legged, weather-beaten, with grizzled, scanty locks flying in admired confusion from beneath his nautical hat. Choleric in temper, with a voice like a fog-horn, a face like a 'full moon in a fog,' hands and arms gnarled like the bark of a tree, with two fingers contorted and rigid, where the icy breath of the northern seas had frozen the rope to his hand during one perilous passage through the narrow Baltic Straits. Such was his outward aspect. The old man did not perhaps present a very inviting appearance

to the casual observer; but beneath all this forbidding exterior there lurked the kindliest and most lovable traits of character, and to the simplicity of a child in money matters there were added the tender-heartedness of a woman to any one in distress, and the free open-handed generosity of the proverbial stage sailor, whom we find so often depicted in old plays. Indeed, the Baltic skippers were a class which, on the *high seas*, was in many respects similar in idiosyncrasy and character to the small farmers and freeholders from the *high lands* of my native county. Alas! both classes have almost entirely disappeared before the modern march of so-called progress. The crews were nearly all recruited in the town to which the vessel belonged. All had to serve a long apprenticeship either in the fishing-boats along the coast or in the northern trading craft. Although the discipline was strict, and the fare such as would horrify even the least fastidious sailor of these latter days, still, as a rule, very kindly relations existed between captain, officers, and crew. No doubt the spirit of localism had much to do with this. Then the forced competition of modern times did not reduce profits to a vanishing point, so that the grain and timber trade which were then the staples kept jogging along in an old-fashioned, humdrum, but fairly remunerative way, and possibly there was more real happiness, contentment, and prosperity than there is now.

I have a lively recollection of the first time when, with my brother Bob, we managed to escape from our grandmother's comfortable villa in the suburbs of Montrose, and made our way down to the docks,

where my uncle's schooner, the *Alexander*, was then lying.

The mate, knowing of course who we were, gave us the run of the ship, and oh! the thrilling delight with which we explored the marvellous recesses of the cabin, hold, and foc's'le. I remember my brother straining his strength to lift me up to the top of the biscuit bin, where, deep down, amid weevils and cockroaches, lay a few battered remnants of the much-prized 'cabin biscuit.' These were as hard as a granite paving-stone, and about as palatable; but to us they seemed a veritable treasure-trove. In trying to reach down, my weight proved too much for Bob's restraining muscles, and I went 'flop' to the bottom of the bin, where I lay huddled up amid the moving menagerie of crawling vermin, until Bob's yell of dismay brought help in the shape of old Uncle Sandie, who jerked me out. Seeing that I was more frightened than hurt, he put a climax on the adventures of this memorable day by nearly choking me with a pannikin of gin, which was his specific for 'all the ills that flesh is heir to,' but which was certainly rather unsuitable for a schoolboy scarce entered on his teens. It nearly choked me.

When the Baltic fleet came back from a northern voyage, many were the delicacies that found their way even up the Glen to the old manse. The chief of these were smoked reindeer tongues, and strong waters in curious hand-painted bottles or flasks of thin white glass with narrow necks. Then there were flat clouded flasks filled with the most potent healing medicament, known as Riga Balsam, the virtues of which were vaunted all over the country-side. Sooth to say,

for cuts and bruises no embrocation could well have been more remedial in its effects. Square bottles of Hollands, too, must have not unfrequently been smuggled ashore; and rolls of tobacco, almost saturated with the pungent properties of tarry yarn, were smuggled ashore by the sailors. I have often seen them in my young days being displayed to the villagers in the bothies of the farms, and in the village workshops, as a rare prize. But perhaps the present from foreign parts most valued by the thrifty housewife was what, think you? Well, just the tail of a musk rat. This caudal appendage to the predatory rodent was carefully treasured up in the napery chest, or in the linen closet, and it was considered quite an acquisition. When company had to be entertained the spotless napery was displayed, and charged the atmosphere with an all-pervading odour of musk, giving evidence to the assembled guests that some Baltic skipper was numbered amongst the circle of the guidwife's friends.

Many skippers were no doubt of the Mynheer Van Dunck order; that is to say, 'they never got drunk,' but the quantities they 'tippled' would have amazed the teetotal statistic compilers nowadays.

On one occasion, my uncle having met an old crony —one Captain Hodge—had stayed out

'Boosin' at the nappy'

till almost

'The wee short 'oors ayont the twal','

until at length they thought it high time to proceed down Bridge Street to their respective homes. Now it happened that good old Dr. Patterson, the revered

incumbent of the 'Auld Heich Kirk,' and who was very fond of astronomical observations, had just come out in the chill night air to look at an expected partial eclipse of the moon which was then due. It was a beautiful clear moonlight night, the snow crisp under foot, and the air snell and keen. The two worthy skippers, arm in arm, had taken the middle of the broad street, and with many a lurch and supererogatory tack were bearing down towards their domestic haven. All of a sudden, Captain Hodge descried the tall, spare figure of his reverence, and with a ludicrous assumption of sobriety, and a swift intuition of the possible censure that the minister might pass upon them for their rather profuse potations, he steered Uncle Sandie to the side-path which led past the minister's house. Then he himself, cunningly bringing his hat down over his brow, made an outward tack, and kept on his way along the main channel of the broad street. It was rather mean of him, I think, for he was the bigger culprit of the two, and deserved most of the blame for keeping my old uncle out to such an ungodly hour; but his cunning little manœuvre was not to meet with the success he expected from it. At the critical moment, when the old minister was craning his neck, gazing into the placid heavens, the treacherous cargo of schnapps, aboard the rotund skipper, caused him to make a desperate lurch; and the minister turning round, wondering who could be waking the echoes at such an untimely hour, called out 'Who goes there?' Taken quite aback, the lumbering skipper, forgetting his caution, and forsaken by his cunning, but with the leading idea still prominent in his fuddled intellect,

hiccoughed out, 'It's no me, Dr. Patterson, it's Captain Braun!'

You may depend upon it that the two worthies did not hear the last of this little episode for many a long day.

I have said that in those days the factory system, such as we now understand it, had not yet arisen. Indeed, craftsmen and artisans each worked at his calling with his journeymen and apprentices in his own shop, generally attached to the dwelling. So did the shopkeeper. He, assisted by his true helpmate—for a wife was that in those days—lived over or at the back of the shop, and in nearly all little country towns, a good piece of garden ground was an appendage to the establishment. When business was slack, the spare hours were utilised in garden work, and the tinkling little bell attached to one half of the door, by its noisy clamour, gave notice of any chance customer coming to the shop. All the people as a rule were well fed and well clad. In the country districts especially, nearly all the hosiery and much of the outer garments were homespun. Rents were moderate, as were wages; but the people were thrifty and saving, and had the knack of accumulating. The vagrancy and squalid poverty of modern times were practically unknown. Until the advent of railways, the population was almost exclusively Scotch; in fact, even in my boyish days I can only remember one individual—of the Irish race —ever being seen in our village. She was a fine buxom dame, with all the volubility and proverbial quick-witted good nature of her race, and she went by the name of 'Basket Mary.' Her husband was a

basketmaker in Brechin, and Mary trudged through the county, selling the wares he made, in addition to a stock of ballads, and blackletter hornbooks, or chapbooks. These were printed on coarse paper, in abominable type, with woodcuts of the most archaic character, some of which were little if anything superior to the primitive hieroglyphics presented to us in the quaint reproductions of some of our antiquarian societies. The subjects of these ghastly literary efforts were generally, to use the words of the prayer-book, 'battle, murder, and sudden death,' especially 'murder'; and Mary used to get a ready welcome in all the farmhouses around Edzell and Glenesk by the recital of some of the most stirring and blood-curdling episodes in her collection, delivered with a breathless volubility and true Milesian accent, which latter you could have cut with a blunt knife.

Of course in Montrose, as in all the other county towns, there were various grades of society: the county families, the merchant skippers, the more genteel tradespeople, the little professional coteries, lawyers, doctors, etc., the respectable tradesfolk, and so on, down through the various grades, until you came to the waterside contingent, generically spoken of as the 'fisher folk.' There was a well-defined caste system pertaining to all these various grades in the social cosmogony of the little town, quite as iron-bound in its way as the caste system of India. Occasionally, by dint of some lucky marriage connection, by the amassing of wealth, or by the exhibition of some extraordinary social gift or intellectual powers, some member of the lower class might manage to set his

foot on a higher rung of the social ladder; but these cases were rare.

'Tea-pairties,' which were the popular form of entertainment, were confined exclusively to the special coterie sanctioned by family tradition and the unwritten law of custom. If you belonged to a certain set you could predicate with absolute certainty the company you would meet at one of these staid ceremonials. If the banker gave a 'pairty,' you would meet so and so. If the lawyer, the company would likely be much the same; but if one of the Captains' wives was the giver of the feast, possibly a more miscellaneous gathering might be met. The laws relating to comestibles and forms of procedure were also most accurately defined. You must take just so many cups of tea; you must taste three or four kinds of tea cake, and you were expected to make the same laudatory comments on each kind, increasing the number of your superlatives as you proceeded from the first kind of cake to the last. The preserves had to be pree'ed and praised in the same way; and then the small talk had to proceed by delicate gradations from the vaguely-general to the minutely-particular-personal. When the latter stage was reached, the tall caps of the dowagers, with their nodding plumes, got dangerously close to each other, and by that time the 'lords and masters' would be through their second tumbler of whisky-toddy.

One quaint illustration of this almost vanished phase of social life comes back to me as I write. It was a favourite reminiscence of my wife's mother, who was a true Montrose lady of the old school, and bridesmaid to my mother, whose cousin she was.

A master baker, who had made some fortunate speculations in flour and grain, and had thereby amassed considerable wealth, got possessed by a feverish desire, urged thereto by his keen, ambitious, and rather full-blown guidwife, to enter the charmed circle of gentility one degree above that in which they had hitherto lived. He built himself a pretentious mansion, which was furnished in the latest fashionable designs from Edinburgh; and by dint of a little flattery here and a little cajolery there, and other feminine manœuvres, the guidwife had managed to secure acceptances to her invitations for 'a hoose-warmin' pairty' from a number of the genteel folks whose envied ranks she sought to enter.

The momentous night of the 'tea-pairty' at length arrived. Wullie, her 'man,' had long been famous for his dexterity and skill in the manufacture of the finest sorts of tea bread—in fact no tea-pairty in Montrose was considered complete without 'heckled biscuits' and 'shortie' from Wullie D——; and both Wullie and his guidwife had determined that no effort on their part would be spared to provide the most toothsome specimens his art could supply. You can imagine the scene. All the genteel dames of various classes had met in the spacious new 'drawing-room'; and here under one roof were met ladies who had seldom or never met each other before under such circumstances, so that the scanning of dresses and head-gear was of a very searching character.

The sonsy guidwife kept bobbing up and down in a state of pitiable flustration. In the meantime poor Wullie, bathed in perspiration, and as red as a lobster from the heat of the oven, was superintending

the last delicate touches to his preparations in the bake-house near by. Message after message was sent out by the agitated house mistress, until at length Wullie, driven nearly to desperation by the slowness of the oven and this perpetual demand on his nervous energy, lost his temper, and presenting himself at the drawing-room door before the astonished assemblage delivered the following protest: 'Deil tak' yer tongue, guidwife; gin ye want heckled biscuits, ye'll hae to get anither baker neist time'; and then, remembering the gravity of the occasion, he apologetically bowed to the astonished ladies and said: 'It's a' richt noo, leddies, but jist hover a blink till I cheenge ma breeks!'

Another notorious character in Montrose went by the name of Johnnie Baxter. On one occasion, so the story goes, he had been sent for by the housekeeper of one of the leading families to exercise his craft as a stonemason, some brickwork at the back of the chimney requiring repairs. What with soot and dust the job was rather a forbidding one, and the frugal housekeeper, coming in in the midst of the confusion, remarked to Johnnie, 'That's a gey stourie job, Johnnie.'

'Deed ye may weel say that, mem,' responded Johnnie; 'it's michty dry.'

'Perhaps you would like a little drop of spirits?' said the lady.

'Losh, mem, it would gang doon fine the day,' said Johnnie, spitting out some dust as he spoke.

Away went the good lady for the promised refreshment, Johnnie in the meantime gloating in pleased anticipation of the expected treat. You may imagine his feelings when the good housewife reappeared with

a very small liqueur glass in which was dimly discernible a very small modicum of fine old whisky, whose delicious aroma diffused itself through the atmosphere, still further provoking Johnnie's thirst.

Johnnie eyed the minute prescription very disconsolately, and fingered the tiny glass rather gingerly. His hostess, misunderstanding his mien and attitude, said encouragingly :

'Oh, tak' it up, Johnnie ; it'll no hurt ye.'

With a look of disgust Johnnie tossed the mouthful down, saying at the same time, 'Deed no, mem, it widna hurt me 'gin it was veetrol.'

Some time afterwards poor Johnnie's wife drew near to death's door, having been for a long time a poor weary invalid. In fact, the doctors had pronounced her case hopeless. Dr. Laurence had called, and in reply to Johnnie's lachrymose inquiries, had simply told him that the poor woman was past human aid.

'But is there onything I can do for her?' said Johnnie.

'Well,' said the Doctor, 'medicine can do her no good. She is very near death's door ; all you can do is to attend to her comforts, and you might give her a little stimulant.'

Away went Johnnie to fulfil the worthy Doctor's instructions. Having purchased the prescribed quantity of spirits, he 'treated his own resolution' to a dram, and then, two or three more cronies coming in, they shared 'a mutchkin or twa' between them. This was sufficient to rouse Johnnie's fatal appetite, and when he got home he found his poor wife much worse. Remembering what the Doctor had told him, he listened to the Satanic promptings of his evil genius, and sent

the sick woman's stimulating draught to join the company of its predecessors. Presently the Doctor called again, and no doubt observing, by the aid of more than one of his senses, that Johnnie had been 'looking upon the wine when it was red,'—being moreover rather dubious of Johnnie's moral rectitude when whisky was in question,—he asked him point blank, 'Weel, Johnnie, did ye get yer wife the stimulant I ordered?'

'Ou ay,' said Johnnie with a hiccough, 'I got the steemulant.'

'Ay, but did ye administer it?' said the Doctor.

Then Johnnie, with a fine outburst of drunken candour, said: 'Weel, as fac's deith, Doctor, I got the whusky for her, but ye see ye tell't me she couldna last till mornin', and that naethin' would dae her ony guid, so I jist thocht it's a peety tae waste guid whusky, and so, Doctor' (this with a sigh), 'I jist took the drappie masel';' but he hastened to add, seeing a look of strong disgust on the Doctor's face, 'I gied her the hooch o't.'

Painter Tam was another Montrose worthy, whose name denotes his calling. He was extremely fond of whisky, and was continually getting into trouble through his indulgences. He had a peculiar impediment in his speech, and when in his cups it became more apparent. On one occasion, shortly after coming out of jail, where he had served sentence for drunkenness, he got some temporary employment painting the church. The minister happened to be passing and inquired what he was doing there.

'Ah, minister, I'm gaein' in for the kirk, efter comin' oot o' c-c-c-college,' said the ready-witted rogue.

On another occasion, being in his chronic state of impecuniosity, he applied to a somewhat religious old maiden lady for a job. This she said she was unable to give him, but being of a very persistent nature, and noticing that her floorcloth was very much the worse for wear, he offered to paint it with an illustration of some biblical subject, suggesting, for example, 'the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea.' For this he wanted seven and sixpence; but the old lady objected to the price, and after a great deal of haggling Painter Tam agreed to do the work for five shillings. He took the floorcloth home, and in the course of a few days returned with it painted a brilliant red.

'Ay,' said the old lady on looking at her bargain, 'and where's the children of Israel, Tam?'

'C-c-ca' wa', ye silly auld limmer; wid ye hae them whamlin' i' the watter yet?'

CHAPTER XI

Local Jealousies between County Towns—Curious Nicknames—Aspersions on Brechin—Origin of the Term 'Reed Lichties'—A Sapient Toon Cooncil—Blin' Hughie of Dundee—The 'Spooters' o' Farfar—Celebrities—Singer Jeemer—Peter Reid and the famous 'Farfar Rock'—The Drawl of the Mearns—Primitive Social Manners—'No the Whisky but the Here's t'ye!'—The Handloom Industry—Weavers' Rhymes—Bailie Fyfe and the Auctioneer—A Vanishing Bottle—Drinking Orgies and Wild Wagers—Amusing Instance of Local Jealousy.

LOCAL jealousies were very rife before the advent of railways had toned down the asperities of isolation, and the stupid suspicions of imperfect knowledge. The various towns in a county each imagined that its own interests demanded the disadvantage of a neighbour; and the modern liberal free-trade doctrine, that the greatest common good means the greatest individual good too, had not yet penetrated the consciousness of the little cliques and petty rings that arrogated to themselves the right to represent the public sentiment. Thus, for instance, Montrose looked with suspicion and distrust on Brechin, and *vice versa*.

The Montrosians were named 'Gable-Enders,' as many of the houses bordering the broad and picturesque market-place were built with their gables facing the open street. The Brechiners were generally designated by their detractors, from a fine scorn of their main industry,—the handloom linen-weaving,—'the Creeshie Wyvers o' Brechin.' Gross imputations on their honesty were often made. It was said that when the 'creeshie wyvers' went out for a holiday the good-wives in country parts, on hearing that a Brechin contingent was afoot, would run hastily to the hedge-rows and clothes-lines to take in the family washing, with the warning cry—

'Tak' in yer sarks, guidwives, for here comes the Brechiners.'

In a mixed company, on one occasion where the majority happened to be worthy burghers of the much-maligned city of linen weavers, a rather vehement expression of this popular aspersion had been made by one of the company. An indignant remonstrance had at once been made by the Brechiners present, one of whom, with clenched fist and an angry glare in his eye, had asked the offender—

'Do you mean, sir, to say that there are nae honest men in Brechin?' apparently with a view to an ultimate resort to a more forcible style of argument.

The Montrose man looked over his opponent, and then, with true Scottish doggedness and caution, responded—

'Weel, sir, I'll no be sayin' that there's nae honest men in Brechin; but I will say this, sir, that it's michty far atween their doors.'

The dwellers in Bonnie Dundee were and are known as 'Tay Watter Willies,' while the douce burghers of Arbroath are still known as 'Reed Lichties'; and they got that name in the following way.

The march of improvement had reached the somewhat sleepy town of Dundee; and as red stained glass, although a very costly commodity then, was coming largely into use for danger-signalling, and denoting leading marks for navigation by night, the Dundee Harbour Board had considered it wise to erect, at considerable expense, a fine red light at the end of their pier. Of course local rumour magnified the cost and splendour of this innovation. The skippers of the coasting craft, and generally those 'that did business in great waters,' hailed the light as a great convenience; and it was felt by the Arbroath Council that their borough was to some extent eclipsed by the superior enterprise of their rising rival. So the worthy provost trudged all the way to Dundee to see this famous 'reed licht,' about which so much had been heard. He had a good look at the lamp, the colour of which puzzled him exceedingly, as he had never seen such stained glass before. On his return to his native town he reported to his council that there was no reason in the world why Arbroath also should not, with the aid of a little 'reed pent,' put itself even with the despised and detested Dundee.

The 'toon penter,' also a Tam, was called, and away the whole municipal body marched in the gathering gloaming to the white-lozenged glass lamp at the end of the breakwater in which the usual oil lamp was even now dimly burning. The provost ordered Sandie

Swankie, the boatman, to put out to sea to report, in these words—

'Haud aff to the bar, Sandie, an' lat's hear fat ye see'!

'Ay, ay, sir!' said Sandie as he bent to his oars.

'Noo, Tam,' said the provost, addressing the painter, 'gie the white lozen' a coat o' reed pent.'

No sooner said than done; and as the ready brush overlaid the white glass with its ruddy coating, the appreciative councillors stepped back to watch the effect, while the provost hailed the boatman, now rocking on the tumbled waters of the bar. 'Fat div ye see, Sandie?'

A hoarse nautical bellow came back. 'I see a "reed lichtie," sir!'

At this, the delighted provost turned to Tam, and said:

'Od, man! Gie't anither coat, an' we'll lick the Dundee folk yet.'

Again Tam applied the brush, but this time with such generous goodwill that the red lead utterly obscured the light altogether, and poor Sandie in his boat nearly got drowned trying to make his way back in the dark, while the 'toon cooncillors' barked their shins and grazed their noses stumbling along the breakwater on their obscured way home.

Ever since the Arbroathians have, in memory of that attempt at sapient economy, been dubbed 'Reed Lichties'; but on the whole, they accept the cognomen with rather a good-humoured tolerance.

Dundee had its notoriety, no less than the other towns, and the Dundee original was a character known as 'Blin' Hughie.' When the benevolence of his native townsmen had become somewhat exhausted by his im-

portunities, Hughie would wend his way to Forfar, or some other of the neighbouring towns, 'jist,' as he naively would say, 'jist tae gie ma ain toun a bit rest ye ken.'

Forfar, the ancient county capital, a chief seat of the handloom linen-weaving industry, manifested just the characteristics I have been endeavouring to portray (somewhat feebly and sketchily I confess) in connection with Montrose and the other burghs I have mentioned.

The appellative bestowed on the burghers of Forfar was sometimes 'deevil burn me,' or occasionally 'the spooters,' so named from one of the narrow streets known as 'the Spoot,' a haunt of weavers and their multitudinous offspring. The Forfar drawl is probably the broadest in all broad Scotland, if we except the Brechin brogue, which is possibly even more long-drawn and unmusical. The Montrose accent had an element of picturesqueness, not altogether unmusical, as if the lapping of the water on the town piers had to some extent affected the very speech of the burghers; but Brechin and Forfar were unmistakably 'dreich' and harsh in their very speech.

One of the many notable characters of Forfar was a peripatetic ballad-singer, whom many of my readers will remember, and who went by the name of 'Singer Jeemer.' He was so called on account of a knack he had of ending off his words with the syllable 'er.' The following conversation will illustrate this peculiarity.

'One day,' says my friend Mr. Dunn, 'I forgaithered wi' this worthy on the plenstanes in front of Peter Reid's windie, and noticing that Jeemer's airm was in a sling, I asked, "Fat's the maitter wi' the airm, Jeemer?"

'"Airmer!" said he—"maitter eneucher? I gaed awa' t' Brechiner, t' singer at a concerter, fell doon a stairer, broker airmer, near boucherder a' thegitherer."'[1]

But the most notable worthy of Forfar, and one whose name will always be associated with the history of the benevolences and philanthropic movements of the burgh, was that worthy old citizen, Peter Reid. What Scotchman has not heard of Peter Reid's Forfar Rock? Some forty years ago, maybe fifty, Peter kept 'a sma' choppie doon the Spoot,' the thoroughfare now known as Castle Street. Peter's fame arose from the excellence of a rare confection he used to manufacture, in the shape of innumerable little sticks of what Scotch people call 'rock.' These were about four inches long, and the diameter of a thick pencil. To the boys they represented the acme of every possible delicacy. My friend Dunn again writes me: 'In later years,' he says, 'I bought many a packet, but it hadn't the taste of my youth. The demand became too great for Peter to make it in the back shop, and what was made at the sweetie works was fushionless. I ance played rather a trick on Peter—ay, man, it must be forty years ago. I reminded him of it many years afterwards, as he was showing me over the noble hall, which he had built, endowed, and presented to his fellow-townsmen. Peter used to make up for Saturday night's sales a quantity of "oak" as we called it, each stick being neatly rolled in a piece of whity-broon paper, with a corkscrew twist at each end. These he put in glass canisters, which were placed in the window. One of his peculiarities was, that he would not give more than one stick out of

[1] Nearly butchered altogether.

the canister to any one buyer. Now I wanted three or four sticks, but Peter refused to alter his custom for me, and on my rather peremptorily repeating my demand, he ordered me to clear out of the shop, and wouldn't give me any at all. I managed to raise a few shillings, and converted these into "bawbees," and then with the connivance of a few sympathising youngsters, who kept trotting out and in at frequent intervals, I nearly cleaned out Peter's canisters. He eventually, however, dropped on the game, and stopped the supply, with a clout on the side of the head to one of my commissioners, remarking:

'"Gin I had that deil's buckie, Jamie Dunn, I'd gie 'm a sark fu' o' sair banes."'

He was peculiarly independent, even when he had become a wealthy manufacturer. The threepenny packets of Forfar Rock became known to the extreme limits of the British Empire; but if any one wanted five shillings worth, he had to stow away the twenty packets over all his pockets, for not a scrap of paper or bit of string would old Peter provide to make a parcel. The old man too had a fair stock of dry Scotch humour. A lassie one day, using the ordinary colloquialism, asked across the counter for 'a bawbee worth o' Peter Reid.'

'Ay, ma lassie, which bit o' him wad ye like?' said Peter.

The awfully sluggish and long-drawn mode of talking common to the ordinary people in these weaver towns may be exemplified by the following dialogue which took place on 'the stair-heid,' in one of the back streets of Forfar. It is now but seldom that one hears a married woman addressed by her maiden name, but

in my young days it was the rule and not the exception. For instance, our old servant Geordie Ferrier's wife, a comely, rosy-cheeked, little woman, was always known among her familiars not as Mrs. Ferrier, but invariably as plain Bell Tindal, that being her maiden name. Meg Morrison might become by marriage, we will say, Meg M'Intyre, but Meg Morrison she would still remain to the end of the chapter; and so Jess Masterton might marry Tammie Hodgie when she was two-and-twenty, but she would still remain just Jess Masterton and nothing else. And now to our promised dialogue. The *dramatis personæ* are Lizz and Mag.

SCENE—Stair-heid, doon the Spoot.

Lizz. Fine day the day, Mag.

Mag. It is that, na.

Lizz. Ony noos?

Mag. Nae muckle. But fat div ye think Jess Masterton hed till her dennery esterda'? (of course no printing can give any adequate idea of the fearful, long-drawn drawl with which all this is said).

Lizz. I'm shure I dinna ken. Fat wis't?

Mag. Od, 'ooman, can ye no guess?

Lizz. Gae wa' wi' ye. Fu' could I guess?

Mag. Weel, than, she hed staik!

Lizz. Staik! Set *her* up wi' staik! Like her impidence, I'm shure, as if parritch wisna guid eneuch for the like o' her, and her jist fillin' pirns for Jock Sootar.

This homely dialogue illustrates quite a vanished type of provincial life in Scotland. 'Staik' or butcher meat was almost an unknown luxury; and to 'fill the pirns' for the weaver husband was the never-ending

task of the patient housewife in the intervals of washing, mending, baby-tending, house-cleaning, and other domestic operations. Life was indeed of a most primitive type. Wants were few; amusements, save of the rudest kind, almost unknown. Hard manual toil, from morn till night, without intermission, was the common lot of the patient, frugal operatives, and all the modern ameliorations of the artisan's condition were absolutely unknown. No wonder, then, that many a poor, toil-worn, weary workman sought such relief as might be found in the seductions of whisky-drinking; and indeed there was some reasonable meaning in the pithy excuse of the old weaver. Recognising that the only social relaxation he could possibly enjoy was when he met his cronies to interchange ideas over a tumbler of toddy, on being reproached by his good minister for having allowed himself to be overcome by the seductions of the potent national spirit, he said, as the minister expressed his astonishment that he would allow his love for whisky to overcome the better part of his nature:

'Ah, meenister, it's no the whisky, it's the 'here's t'ye' that dis a' the mischeef.'

There was the recognition of a profound social truth and sound philosophy in this reply; and none of the more modern developments of our social life are worthy of a higher meed of grateful recognition than the splendid efforts which have been made by both Church and State, as well as by private munificence, to provide worthier and more acceptable means of wholesome recreation for the working bees of the hive, whose share of the honey is yet far below what they deserve.

and still comes far short of what they righteously are entitled to. But this is opening up a wide subject, and might lead me far afield from my reminiscences.

I may here jot down a well-known rhyme which aptly describes the incessant clatter which filled the whole of these weaver towns with a deaving din, while the swift shuttles plied their noisy tasks. Busy looms were set up in almost every dwelling in the least fashionable parts of these county towns ; and in nearly all the villages the shuttles and treddles kept up the same noisy racket from earliest morn till long past 'dewy eve.' The yarn for the webs, or 'wobs,' as they were locally called, had to be brought either on the weaver's shoulders or on his creaking wheelbarrow from the yarn mills. The 'pirns' which contained the woof had to be filled by the deft hands of the busy housewife, whose task it also was to make the paste or 'batter,' with which the web was liberally anointed, so that the ponderous beam of the loom could work easily backwards and forwards with the greatest saving of effort to the patient, industrious breadwinner. Many a poor tired-out weaver, with aching back and slender frame, racked by a hectic cough induced by the unwholesome atmosphere of fluff and dust and vitiated air in which he had to toil every day for nigh on twice eight hours at a stretch, would straighten his poor weary limbs at the end of a hard week, and repeat almost as if it were a psalm, the weaver's well-known refrain—

> 'Clitterty clatterty,
> Pull up for Saturday ;
> My wob's oot, nae pairns tae fill,
> And Monanday, batter-day.'

Another of the common rhymes among the 'wyver folk' was as follows:—In answer to the kindly salutation, 'Fu are ye the day?' the waggish reply would not unfrequently be

> 'Geylies, brawlies—nae vera weel—
> Thank ye for speirin'; fu' are ye yersel'?
> Jamie's ill, and Johnnie's waur,
> Sandie, he's extror'nar';
> But for masel', I canna tell,
> I'm jist aboot the ord'nar'!'

Among the Forfar notables I must not forget to retail an anecdote of one of the most notorious of them all, the famous Bailie F——. The bailie was a large owner and breeder of stock, and one of the ten-tumbler-at-a-sitting worthies, of whom the ancient burgh could boast not a few. In the pursuit of his special calling he had occasion at times to rent pasture-lands for the use of his numerous purchases in stock, and naturally he was ever on the alert to take advantage of any good grass parks that might be in the market to let. It so happened that some fine well-grassed pastures had been advertised as available for agistment purposes, and the worthy bailie was very anxious to get them for his own cattle. He tried to make a deal privately with the owner, but was told they were to be put up to auction. On the set day, therefore, the bailie, who was well primed with the national beverage, found himself in the auction room. The auctioneer began expatiating in the usual way on the desirable property he had to sell—eloquently described the lie of the land, the fine shelter, the excellent watering facili-

ties, and so on, to the accompaniment of a running fire of contradictions and depreciatory comments from Bailie F——. The more the auctioneer vaunted the excellence of the pastures, the less chance the bailie saw of his getting them at the low price he had decided to pay for them. At length the auctioneer began to show how dry the season had been—how pasturage was almost at a premium—how this particular agistment was so close to market, so well preserved, and so on, that bids began to come in rather briskly, much to the irate and half-fou' bailie's disgust. The auctioneer, who knew his business well, did not of course allow the bailie to have things all his own way, and at length, pointedly addressing him, made some very pithy and telling remarks about the succulence and abundance of the grass, and that this was a chance no sensible man would let slip. The bailie, now fairly wroth, suddenly exploded, with the following outburst: —'Oh haud yer tongue, ye haiverin' eediot. Gerse! gerse! Fine gerse! Dod, man, Nebuchadnezzar wad hae eat'n't a' up in a fortnicht!' Amid the roars of laughter that filled the room the irate bailie was allowed to become the purchaser.

Let me give yet another of one of this happily fast-vanishing type. An old fellow, one Arthur G——, had married a young wife, and she had so far managed to keep him in pretty good order; but one luckless evening for her, Arthur met an old crony with whom he had 'given resolution a treat' several times, and nothing would satisfy him but he must press his unwilling companion to accompany him home. Home they accordingly 'stauchered,' and Arthur was tem-

porarily abashed by the reproachful looks of his young wife. They sat down to the tea-table, and, the whisky again asserting itself, Arthur insisted on the bottle being produced. The friend was really sorry for Mrs. G——, and tried in vain to back up her efforts to keep the old man from absorbing any more of the potent liquor. However, Arthur was obdurate, and to avoid a scene the poor woman had to produce the bottle. Still the proprieties must be observed, so she asked Arthur to say grace before beginning the meal. The association of ideas produced a quietening effect on the drouthie auld carle, and, as he reverently bent his head, closed his eyes, and began to intone the grace, the guidwife slipped the bottle behind the cushion on the sofa, hoping that her man might forget his imperious demand for more drink. However, as soon as Arthur opened his eyes again he stretched out his hand for the bottle, but finding it gone, he turned to his wife and said, 'Feth, guidwife, I'm thinkin' it's mair needfu' I suld "watch" than "pray" in your company.'

Associated with the drinking habits, another vice was most fashionable, among the richer classes at least—that was an inveterate propensity to make absurd and foolish wagers. Some of these were most outrageously extravagant. At certain stages of a debauch men would dare each other to perform all sorts of extravagances. If the challenge were not promptly accepted, the refuser had to pay the penalty of losing the bet which generally accompanied the wild and riotous defiance. Some of these recorded bets are almost incredible, were they not supported by indubit-

able testimony. One of the best, perhaps, is that of which the humorous and eccentric Jamie Sim of Pinlathie was the hero. The fun had been waxing furious. One young laird, dashing his peruke in the fire, had yelled out, 'Wigs i' the fire for a guinea,' and the company had heaped the fire with wigs. Roused to drunken emulation, another young laird of the company cast off his coat, and pitching it on the fire, cried, 'Coats in the fire for five guineas.' No sooner said than done. But the laird o' Pinlathie put a stopper on the mad frolic by coolly taking out his set of false teeth, and pitching them in the fire, calling out, 'Teeth i' the fire for thirty guineas.' He won all round.

The local jealousy between town and town of which I have spoken is amusingly illustrated by the following anecdote. A worthy burgher of Perth and a Newburgh man had got into a rather acrimonious dispute, over their toddy, anent the merits of their respective towns. The Perth man vaunted the virtues of the beautiful Tay and the noble expanse of the city links. The Newburgh man insisted that their water was purer and clearer, and the breezy heights about their town put the links of Perth completely in the shade. The Perth man renewed the attack by speaking of their busy streets and the volume of their trade. As Newburgh happened to be a favoured changing stage for numerous intersecting lines of mail coaches, the Newburgh man was able to score a point by insisting that 'mair stage-coaches gaed through Newburgh in a day than cam' tae Perth in a week.' This put the champion of the 'Fair City' on his mettle, and swelling out his chest with

conscious dignity, he rather pompously delivered what he considered a clincher.

'Ah!' said he, 'but oor provost gangs aboot wi' a chain.'

'Dis he?' drily responded the other. 'Aweel, we lat oors gang aboot lowse.'

CHAPTER XII

Kirks—Ministers and Sermons—The Minister's Place in the Social and Intellectual Life of the People—Sermon Evolution—Tendency to become commonplace—A rather Exaggerated Parody—Impromptu on a 'Dreich' Preacher—Frank Self-criticism—The Brechin Beadle—The Collections and Plate at the Door—Candles—Peppermints—Anecdotes of Dr. Foote—An Outside View of the Subject—'Great Preevileges' o' the Auld Saints—Literalism of the old Bible Critics—Rendering Scripture History realistically—Humorous Instances—Aubraham's Bosom—Pawky Estimate of King David's Character—'The Scarlet Woman.'

INNUMERABLE are the stories told at the expense of ministers, and having reference to 'the services of the sanctuary' generally.

It is little to be wondered at that 'the minister' in the days of our grandfathers was in many respects a person of even greater consequence than 'the laird himsel'.' When we remember how meagre were the opportunities for acquiring information, how few the facilities for procuring intellectual nutriment of any kind, can we wonder that the hebdomadal utterances from the pulpit furnished a theme for criticism and comment which nowadays would be supplied by the daily news-

papers or the cheap magazine? Beyond a few standard works such as *The Scots Worthies*, and a few volumes of sermons, with possibly *Wilson's Tales of the Borders*, or some such book, there were no libraries in the Mearns; scarcely even a volume of Burns was to be found. A Bible and a shorter Catechism were, to be sure, found even in the lowliest habitation; but the toil during the week-days was so incessant, and the conditions of life so irksome and depressing,—bodily fatigue and weariness was such a constant factor in the daily life of the peasantry,—that the Sabbath rest was in very sooth a heaven-sent boon; and the deliverances of the minister from the pulpit were the only medium, as a rule, through which the intellectual side both of farmer and farm-labourer was approached at all.

Little wonder, then, that the sermon formed a theme of never-failing discussion, and little wonder, too, that the minister himself felt impelled to 'give good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over,' in his weekly dole of intellectual pabulum, when it had to fulfil such an important function. Quite apart, therefore, from the sacred demands of his calling as a preacher, and as one who had the handling of the sacred oracles, the Scottish minister of the olden time felt instinctively that he had really to fill the place in the social cosmogony which is filled by the journalist nowadays, who, when he starts a new paper, always sets out with the truthful proposition that he does it, purely, 'to supply a much-felt want.'

A mere emotional address, therefore—a mere impassioned appeal, and a rhetorical display of verbal fireworks, such as too often constitutes the modern

sermon of twenty minutes' duration,—would never have satisfied the intellectual, to say nothing of the spiritual, cravings of the old-fashioned Scottish congregation. The sermon had to be a highly-polished discourse, constructed on well-recognised, conventional lines, containing doctrine, exposition, logical inference, and practical application. So trained were the people in this critical habit of mind that it undoubtedly stimulated the minister to put his best powers into his work, although from our modern point of view much of the work produced looks dreary, turgid, involved, and unspeakably depressing. That there were giants of pulpit eloquence in those days goes, of course, without saying; but many of the ministers were indubitably 'unco dreich' as preachers; and when we consider that in addition to visitations, prayer-meetings, Bible-classes, presbytery deliberations, and other duties pertaining to the ministerial office, they were expected to turn out Sabbath after Sabbath two, and sometimes three, long sermons of the kind just described, it will easily be seen that the sermon must often have drifted into bald commonplace. A highly artificial and conventional style became the order of the day. Instead of being a *preacher*, the minister in fact too frequently became merely a professional sermoniser; and many comical anecdotes are related illustrative of this prevailing habit of mind and thought. It became the fashion to veil the paucity of their ideas by the liberality with which they interlarded the sermon with quotations from Scripture, and frequent repetitions of some text or favourite phrase, delivered with astonishing lung-power and much gesticulation. In fact, the arms were used

sometimes in place of the brain, and the rustic congregations got so accustomed to this outward and visible manifestation of the theologian's equipment that they refused to think any good of a man who could not at least perspire freely in the pulpit, and 'ding the dust oot o' the cushion, or the guts oot o' the Bible,' as one homespun critic forcibly put it.

I have heard of a Highland parish minister who preached on one occasion a sermon something after this fashion, taking for his text the words, 'Wāālk ye caircumspaictly.' He proceeded in this wise—

'Ma dear breethren, maybe some o' ye 'ill no ken what the apoastle means by caircumspaiction? "Wāālk ye caircumspaictly." Weel, caircumspaiction, ma dear freends, is jist cāāshion!

'Cāāshion, caircumspaiction; caircumspaiction, cāāshion. "Wāālk ye caircumspaictly."

'Noo, cāāshion or caircumspaiction is a great Christian vairtue, and I mean tae explain by means o' a seemilee or meetaphor or eelistrāātion, what cāāshion or caircumspaiction is. "Wāālk ye caircumspaictly."

'Noo, ma freends, ye've a' seen a gairden,—oo ay, nae doot, a gairden ye've a' seen. "Wāālk ye caircumspaictly." And in this gairden will be growin' berry busses, an' currant busses, an' aiple trees, an' pear trees, an' cherry trees, an' a' the fruits that are pleesant tae the eye an' guid for the taste o' man. "Wāālk ye caircumspaictly." An' tae keep the fruit from bein' stolen by robbers an' thieves an' deepredawtors, it will be surroondit wi' a heich wa', an' for the mair effectual defence, the

tap o' the wa' will be plaistered wi' bits o' broken gless stuck everywhere a' roond. "Wāālk ye caircumspaictly." I hae nae doot, ma Chreestian breetherin, ye hae a' likewise seen a cāāt—a cōmmon, domestic cāāt, it may be a gray cāāt, or a black cāāt, or a broon cāāt, or a brockit cāāt; but nae doot ye hae seen this cāāt come upon the tap o' the surroondin' wa', plaistered wi' the bits o' brocken gless. "Wāālk ye caircumspaictly."' (And then as he approaches his climax, he increases in fervour. He shakes his head, gives a tremulous intenseness to his pronunciation, and pounds the cushion in front of him; while, suiting his action to his word, he imitates the delicate, gingerly gait of a cat walking on glass, as he thus proceeds:)—'And ah! ma dear freens; ye hae seen it pit its yae fit doon this w'y, an' its tither fit doon this w'y; an' thā-ā-ā-t's cā-ā-ā-tion, ma dear breethren—thā-āt's cā-ā-ātion.' (His voice rising to a shrill *tremuloso.*)—'Cā-ā-ātion! Caircumspaiction! Caircumspaiction! Cā-ā-ātion! "Wā-ā-ā-lk ye caircumspaictly. . . .'"

And so it would go on—a weary, dreary, droning-out of platitudes; and however extravagant the above travesty may seem, I solemnly declare I have heard nearly as bad myself from more than one preacher of the old school.

The following impromptu, written by a victim, not inaptly describes one such:—

> 'With reverent step we mount the stair,
> Intent to hear a teacher;
> But oh! the disappointment sair,
> We found a weary preacher.

He gabbled owre the sacred page,
He hirpled throwe the prayer ;
A gowk confessed, though lookin' sage ;
My very heart was sair.
Yearning for "bread," he gave "a stone" :
His ilka thocht was addled ;
Let it be written with a groan,
He didna preach—he twaddled !'

Few ministers, however, would be so frank in their self-criticism as the kindly old pastor of a northern parish, who used to commit his confessions to a private diary, and about whom the following is told.

On one occasion, it being the fast day with his people, he made arrangements for a friendly minister in a neighbouring parish to conduct the services. He himself was but a poor preacher. He could scarcely have delivered an extempore address for his very life, and even written composition was at all times an irksome task for him.

Rejoicing in the prospect of one day's unwonted freedom, and expecting to meet his friendly co-presbyter at church, he went to the sacred edifice, quite unprepared to speak, and you can easily imagine his concern when, the hour of worship having struck, his expected substitute had not arrived. As a matter of fact, the poor minister who had promised to officiate for him had been thrown from his horse at a boggy bit of the road some eight or ten miles away, and was little likely that day to mount the pulpit.

With growing anxiety, our poor minister, seeing the congregation assembled, was confronted with the awkward situation, quite unprovided with a sermon,

and unprepared with ten consecutive ideas. Necessity impelled him to make some pretence of preaching, and he had to get into the pulpit.

His diary, which was found after his death, had an entry relating to this memorable occasion, which will best describe the poor minister's feelings. I would ask the reader to note the last six words of the entry, as being one of the finest illustrations of the pithy, condensed expressiveness of the Scottish language with which I am acquainted.

The entry ran thus—

'June 16th.—Fast-day in oor pairish. Expeckit auld Andra Macilwraith tae preach for me. Didna come. Haed tae dae't masel'.'

(Now come the six words.)

'Haivert awa—sair forfouchen—wauchled throwe.'

An amusing instance of the exaggerated ideas of their own importance some of the residents in these small provincial towns occasionally had, is told of the beadle of the City Road Church in Brechin. The church used to be called the Back Side Church by adherents of rival sects. The beadle was engaged one day sweeping out the church and dusting the seats. It happened that a young probationer, rather a tyro in pulpit oratory, had been engaged to preach on the morrow, and he had stolen down quietly to have a look at the church and familiarise himself somewhat with the surroundings. The supercilious beadle watched him out of the corner of his eye for a few moments, taking a mental inventory of his appearance, etc. Then, with all the conscious pride of office, and a swelling sense of

local importance, he addressed the timid, shrinking youth :

'Are ye the chield that's tae preach the morn?'

'Yes, I believe I am.'

'Aweel, see an' tak' care o' yersel'. Ye ken *this* is Brechin.' The significant emphasis put on the word 'this,' was simply delicious.

It may give some idea of the niggardliness and cold, apathetic indifference of the old 'moderate' order of things before the Disruption, when I say that from reliable sources I have been informed that out of a congregation of some 1600 worshippers in Brechin, the average collection seldom exceeded £2 per Sabbath. Little wonder that scoffing critics have given as a reason for the existence of farthings, that they were simply invented for the use of Scottish Church offertories. I am inclined to believe, however, that such instances of meanness were the exception and not the rule. In fact, I am inclined boldly to place on record my belief that, notwithstanding many sneering slanders to the contrary, the Scottish people, to their credit be it said, have always been trained to give liberally to the support of their churches—that is, when one considers how naturally poor the country was, and how little realised wealth was divided amongst the bulk of those who formed the ordinary church-going masses. The big pewter plate always stood invitingly at the church door, and one of my earliest recollections associated with the 'ordinances of the sanctuary,' was the patter, patter, and tinkle, tinkle, of the offerings of the poor people, showered with a noisy clatter into the plate. By connoting the

volume of sound thus produced, the elders and deacons in the vestry could always shrewdly gauge what sort of congregation was in the church. At that time we had no gas in the village, and had to depend for church illumination on homely tallow candles. These were stuck in tin sconces at intervals through the church, and diffused what was certainly only 'a dim religious light,' and not a very savoury-smelling one either, for the place was seldom swept. Nearly every old woman seemed to think it part of a religious duty to bring some pungent-smelling herb or flower with her, and when these had faded in the hot air they were left on the benches or seats, or thrown on the floor, there to accumulate. At the end of months, what with dust, cobwebs, and withered flowers, and various other flotsam and jetsam, there was almost enough litter in the sacred building to provide bedding for a well-supplied stable. We boys used to look upon the candle-ends in the sconces as our particular perquisites. At all events we used surreptitiously to appropriate them, and they were used afterwards with great effect in the illumination of turnip lanterns, for which purpose they acquired a mercantile value, and were frequently the subjects of profitable barter for 'bools' and 'peeries,' and other objects dear to the schoolboy heart.

Another truly 'reeligious' commodity was peppermint lozenges of the very strongest kind. These were consumed in immense quantities, presumably to keep the good folks awake if the sermon happened to be 'by-ord'nar' dreich.' The old wives patiently sucked and

masticated these pungent confections for hours at a time, much in the same way as a cow chews the cud. Not unfrequently even more substantial refreshments, in the shape of apples, oranges, and other fruits, were stealthily assimilated by the younger worshippers in much fear and trembling, the stolen bite being sometimes accompanied by a sounding box on the ear from some maternal hand, which, for a time, would wake the echoes of the cobwebbed ceiling. The windows were of the diamond-lozenge pattern, set in a leaden framework, and were inconceivably grimy ; and thus whenever a thunderstorm hovered over the church the atmosphere inside became as dull and gloomy as oftentimes was the officiating preacher. I remember on one occasion hearing the Reverend Dr. A. L. R. Foote, a learned theologian and well-known author in his time, make rather an abrupt ending to the service, much to the amusement and relief of his younger hearers—at all events I can answer for one of them—although some of the Conservative old folks professed to be much scandalised. The worthy Doctor, who was a most eccentric character, although one of the kindliest of men, and deeply attached to my father, happened to be very short-sighted. He also shocked the susceptibilities of the unco-straitlaced by insisting on reading closely from the manuscript, that being considered a great drawback to his usefulness by some of the older people. However, on this occasion, during the sermon, a dense black thundercloud overspread the heavens, and produced an intense gloom in the church. Old Sandie Dorrit, the church officer, had gone down, decent man, to regale himself with kail and bannocks at his home

in the village, as he had other duties devolving upon him that day, which would occupy his usual dinner hour. My father was preaching for Doctor Foote in Brechin. My mother, who ordinarily would have been equal to the occasion, was, I am afraid, on this particular date sound asleep, having been overcome, no doubt, by the hot weather, certainly not by the fervour of the preacher's delivery. I suppose most of the elders and deacons had succumbed to the same somniferous influence. At all events the poor doctor boggled and stumbled, wiped his glasses, looking round in vain to see if any one would come to the rescue. At last he lifted his manuscript boldly from the concealing recesses of the bulky pulpit Bible, and, to the horror of such old people as were awake, defiantly produced it in the sight of the whole congregation, and turning it from side to side in the effort to get more light upon its crabbed handwriting, he tried in vain to decipher his learned discourse. Alas! the cloud outside got thicker as his confusion increased. At length, seeing no help for it, the good old Doctor shut up the Bible with a bang which awakened all the sleepers, and said, in very broad homely Scotch, 'Weel, sirss, may God bless the preachin' o' His word, for I canna see tae read nae mair.'

The above anecdote of Dr. Foote recalls another of the same fine old Christian gentleman which well illustrates the shrewd, practical character of the man, combined with a whimsical eccentricity which often led to his being misjudged and rather unfairly criticised.

He had occasion to visit one of his parishioners, an old ailing woman, named Janet D——. He was due at a rather important meeting in another part of

the town, and had scant time at his disposal. After saluting Janet in pleasant, homely fashion, he proceeded somewhat in this way—

'Noo, Janet, jist turn up the Fourteent o' John, an' read the first verse.'

Janet did so, and the worthy doctor expounded and explained the verse, saying some very beautiful and comforting things to the poor old body. Then, in his abrupt but kindly way, he said:

'Noo, read the second verse.'

She did so, and the exposition proceeded; and so, in like fashion, the old woman and the doctor got through some six or eight verses. Suddenly the doctor, remembering his other engagement, looked at his watch, and finding his time had flown faster than he had imagined possible, he rose to his feet, and with a kindly pat on the back of his aged and frail friend, said:

'Noo, Janet, I find I hae little time to bide, so ye'll jist pray for yersel' the day, for indeed ye ken better fat ye're needin' than I do!'

On another occasion, Miss Brown, sister of the author of that most pathetic little sketch, *Rab and his Friends*, and one of the gentlest and kindliest of women I have ever met, was sitting in the church with my sister Jeannie, and the preacher happened to be one of the 'dreich' and dreary sort. After a wearisome and tedious stretch of involved dogmatic disquisition, poor Miss Brown getting more and more weary at every sentence, he drawled out, 'Noo, ma breetherin, let's tak' anither view of the subject.' This was too much for Miss Brown. Whispering to my sister, she said, 'Come away, Jeannie dear, we'll tak' an outside view of

the subject' ; the sleepy hearers no doubt envying her independence, and wishing that they could adopt the same method of freeing themselves from the irksome thraldom of the pulpit.

The Miss Brown above referred to lived with us in the manse for some time, and her gentle ways and sweet disposition endeared her to us boys, as she was always kindly alert to make our boyish life more pleasant and refined. To this day her sweet, patient face and gray silk dress stand out as one of the brightest pictures on my boyish memory's screen. Her brother, Dr. John Brown, who had a keen appreciation of quaint Scottish humour, used to tell a story at the expense of his sister, which I venture to give here. When Miss Brown had left my father's house, and taken up a course of housekeeping for her venerable old father, the Rev. Dr. Brown, at Arthur Lodge, Dalkeith Road, in Edinburgh, she devoted herself largely to works of charity and benevolence, which made her memory beloved under many a lowly roof where suffering and sickness had cast a shade. Her Christianity being of an intensely practical character, she dispensed many delicacies for the poor aged objects of her bounty ; and of course, while supplying their bodily wants, she was not unmindful of the higher claims which belong to the spiritual nature, and while providing jellies and provisions, she always read a chapter of the Bible and administered a few words of kindly counsel to her old pensioners. But there was one rather callous old fellow upon whom she never seemed to be able to make any impression. He would always greedily accept the creature comforts provided for him, but whenever the

Bible was produced he, like King Hezekiah of old, would 'turn his face to the wall'; and Miss Brown could never ascertain whether this was the result of a reverent regard for the book or a distaste for its contents. The old fellow, who must have been over seventy years, kept a most immobile countenance; not even by the flicker of an eyelid would he betray either interest or weariness, either distaste or satisfaction. One day the gentle lady had opened the sacred volume at random, and began reading the first chapter that presented itself, which happened to be a description of the great Jewish monarch's splendid court and Oriental luxuries. When she came to that part of the story which records the great number of Solomon's wives, etc., much to her astonishment, the old bedridden cripple manifested for the first time some appearance of awakening interest, and, slowly turning round to the surprised lady, with a flicker of humour in his faded eyes, he said, in a very shaky voice, 'Eh, Miss Broon, what great preevileges thae Auld Testament saints maun hae enjoyed!'

Now, this quaintly familiar way of speaking of Biblical characters and sacred subjects was strongly characteristic of the older generation of 'Oor ain folk.' There was not a suspicion of irreverence in the familiarity they allowed themselves in thus referring to scriptural persons or incidents, though possibly to more modern and modish notions it would appear rude and irreverent.

It was simply the outcome of the close, intense, and constant attention which was given to the study of Biblical history and biography as part of the

parish and denominational school system, as well as the Sunday school system, of the bygone days. It appeared possibly as a part too of the theological training of which I have spoken, as embodied in those tedious pulpit utterances which took the place of the countless modern agencies which are now employed to train the intellect and fill the mental horizon of our latter-day young people. When libraries were few, when the newspaper press was almost an unknown power, and when the Bible really formed the great lesson-book for young and old, scriptural characters became invested with a living reality. They were personified, so to speak, in the daily thoughts of the people, and heroes like the Judges and Kings of Israel took the place in the popular mind of those national characters, or the creations of literature, which have now become household words among a people to whom modern historians have opened the great picture gallery of the past. Wizards such as Sir Walter Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, and the glorious company of our masters of modern fiction, have filled the chambers of imagination and memory of even the poorest amongst us with a long array of living creations, who, alas! may have jostled aside the old scriptural characters which were such real and living entities to our forefathers. Some of the Scottish stories bearing upon this point are among the highest in their unconscious humour that can well be imagined. It is in fact impossible to reproduce exactly some of the best of them. They would be looked upon as quite outrageous and altogether too irreverent and

audacious for the sophisticated tastes of modern readers. Yet if one can only call up the peculiar state of society which gave them birth, it will be easily understood that they arose quite naturally, and were a direct outcome of that easy familiarity with scriptural subjects which was one of the most marked characteristics of the old rural state of things. Here for instance is one of them.

A farmer, who had been a loud professor of religion, but whose daily conduct gave the lie to his professions, had just died in the odour of sanctity. As he had been a leading elder in the kirk, it seemed incumbent on the parishioners to give him a burial befitting the high position to which he had attained. His private character had, however, become pretty well known. Various circumstances of little credit to his previous sanctimoniousness had leaked out, and at the funeral, to which, as in duty bound, nearly all the parishioners had come, further disclosures had passed from mouth to mouth of discreditable dealings and dishonest doings, and a feeling of disgust had taken the place of the sympathy with which many of the mourners had set out. The only man who had a word of praise to say for the deceased was another elder of like kidney with the departed hypocrite, who quite overdid his part by loudly vaunting the virtues of the dear departed,—dear in more senses than one, for it soon became known amongst the assembled farmers that they would each and all be heavy losers when the dead man's estate came to be administered. One young farmer in particular, who found himself a likely victim to the tune of some hundred pounds, felt

rather resentful, and when the fulsome, hypocritical Pharisee who was thrusting himself to the front began once more loudly and aggressively to vaunt the virtues of the deceased, the young farmer's soul waxed wroth within him.

'Ah!' said the smug-faced panegyrist; 'so poor Tammas has gaen tae his lang hame. Ah!' turning up his eyes and smacking his lips, 'Ah, but he wis a fine man wis Tammas.'

'Ou ay,' growled the young farmer; 'I dare say he wis, aff an' on, as guid's *some* o' his neebors' (putting a tremendous emphasis on the '*some*').

'Ah!' again exclaimed the wily humbug; 'but he wis, a graund, upricht, strauchtforrit, godly, pious man, wis Tammas. Eh, sirss, I've nae doot he's in Aubraham's bosom noo.'

This was too much for the bluff young farmer. He saw through the oily humbug at a glance, and said:

'Humph; I hae ma doots. I'm thinkin' Aubraham's no sic a fule as tae let him creep sae far ben.'

Or take yet another. The minister had been attending at what he supposed was the deathbed of one of his parishioners. The presumably dying man had been famed for his keen sense of fun, and for a bright, pawky turn of expression, which had made him somewhat celebrated as a humorist. The minister, in his anxiety 'to improve the occasion' and take advantage of the solemn opportunity, had opened the Book just at random, and began to read in tremulous accents the touching story of the chaste patriarch Joseph and his adventure with Potiphar's

wife. To his consternation, and not a little to his indignation, happening to look up he saw the bed shaking under the suppressed laughter caused by a paroxysm of humour which was convulsing the frame of his sick friend. In tones of indignant remonstrance he demanded to know what was the cause of this outburst of unseemly levity. 'What wicked thought,' he demanded, 'has Satan put into your head, that you should indulge in this ungodly mirth at such a time as this, when you should rather be preparing for your exit from this vale of tears, and your entrance into a higher and a nobler life? I demand to know, sir, what is the cause of this wanton laughter, of this lamentable exhibition at such a solemn time.'

The poor patient, whose hearty, though silent laughter had been working upon him as a good tonic, at length gasped out between paroxysms of attemptedly suppressed mirth, 'Losh, meenister, I canna help it—I canna help it.'

'But,' said the minister, 'I demand to know, sir, what ye mean? What in the world is causin' ye tae laugh at this noble record, and at such a time too?'

'Ha ha, ho ho!' faintly came from the bed. 'I canna help it, sir — I canna help it; the thocht jist struck me that if it hed bin auld Davit the Psalmist, feth he wadna hae been sae blate.'

Take still another, which very clearly illustrates the characteristic of which I have been speaking. Our next character is a blind, toothless, old body, whose advancing infirmities precluded her from attending church, but who still retained all her wonted

critical faculty, and a great desire to hear what the minister had been 'preachin' aboot,' but who of course had now to depend on information got second-hand.

She was only an ignorant old body, not very refined, intensely matter of fact, and she evidently took the Bible story in a practical, literal way that we do not meet with among critics nowadays. The personages in the sacred record were very real characters to her, and she must have possessed at least one fundamental qualification of the poet, viz. the gift of personification. She was sitting at the door of her humble shieling. It was a beautiful summer's day. Great billows of crimson heather rolled from hill-crest to hill-crest in successive undulations of odorous bloom, and the subdued hum of satiated bees filled the air with an all-pervading, languorous, drowsy monotone. Deep down in the dells, hidden amid waving bracken and sweet-scented birch trees, the mountain rills glanced and gushed, with here a silvery tinkle, and there the melodious gurgle, which caused the scent-laden air to vibrate with throbbing waves of sweetest sound. Afar in the distance the mellowed, deadened boom of the waterfall, dashing its tawny waters over the black rocks that sought to impede the tumultuous rush of the brawling stream, came fitfully at intervals on the soft breeze. Earth and air alike were redolent of beauty. Nature had put on her fairest robes; and the good old lady, leaning, like Jacob, 'on the top of her staff,' simply basked in the mellow sunbeams, drinking in delight at every pore of her

being. Presently, upon her somewhat dulled senses broke the sounds of rippling, childish laughter, and anon her little granddaughter came tripping up the braeside, recalling 'Granny' to the consciousness of the fact that it was Sunday, and the 'kirk was oot.' Peering eagerly forward with her dimmed, bleared eyes, and putting one hand at the back of her ear, she mumbled, 'Is that you, Leeby?'

'Ay, Granny,' came back the quick, clear, childish response.

'Ye'll hae ben tae the kirk, dawtie?'

'Ay, Granny.'

'An' fat wis the meenister preachin' aboot th' day, hinny?'

'Oh, Granny! it wis sic a queer sermon.'

'Yea na; and fat wis the tex', deary?'

'Oh deed, it wis an unco queer tex': I cudna unnerstan' heid nor tail o't.'

'Imph'm,' said the old body, now growing quite eager and excited; 'an' fat wis't aboot than?'

'Oh, it wis a' aboot the Scarlet Wumman—the great whore o' Babylon.'

The old lady at once pricked up her ears, and smiting her staff with some vehemence on the ground, she exclaimed, in tones betokening a sort of reminiscent, confused surprise:

'Od save's a', sirss! Can that wumman be on the ran-dan yet? Heth, I mind she wis a rael bad yin when I wis a wee lassie.'

Now, it must not be supposed that I vouch for the absolute truth of this story; but I give it as a very apposite illustration of quite a vanishing phase

of the old Scottish rural character. It is also doubtless an illustration of the numberless Scotch stories which perhaps are sometimes just a trifle too *prononcé* for the conditions of modern literature. The quaint, racy outspokenness of the Biblical criticism is, however, I imagine, sufficient to win my pardon from the lenient reader, especially if he be 'ane o' oor ain folk.'

CHAPTER XIII

The Old Gloomy Theology—Dawn of a Brighter Faith—The Two Schools illustrated by Anecdote — Growing Tolerance of Scottish Clergy—Instances of the Old Intolerance—Weariness of Church Services — Anecdote of Dr. Kidd — 'Making the best of both Worlds'—'Willie White, an' how he cheated the Craws'—Sleeping Acquaintance—Length of Prayers—'Ma ain Bairn'—'Lat the Jews alane'—Old John Aitken the Beadle —'Resist a' Improvements'—Some Beadle Stories—Anecdotes —An Eccentric Minister—Plain Criticism—Estimate of my Father's Preaching—Examples of 'Exotic' Scottish Humour.

It will not be denied, I imagine, by most candid 'brither Scots,' that the 'teachers and pastors' of those bygone days of which I have been speaking did not incline too extravagantly in their theological conceptions to the 'sweetness and light' of Matthew Arnold's school. It is simply stating recorded fact when I say that there were prevalent then the most distorted, gloomy, and forbidding views of the glorious gospel of redemptive love. In fact, in these more favoured days we have simply 'rediscovered Christ,' as one eloquent modern seer has put it.

The appalling pictures of doom, the horrible conceptions of God's governance and His attitude towards

man, that used to make our little hearts quake in terror, are, I am glad to believe, now almost banished from most Scottish pulpits. It is now increasingly becoming recognised that the gospel is in reality 'Good tidings'; that love is after all a more potent factor for the elevation of our race than fear—than 'dread of the hangman's whip,' as Burns put it. Not only Presbyterians but the whole Catholic Church are, thank God, coming back more and more to the conception of gospel truth, recognised and presented by the Apostolic and Greek Church of the first two or three centuries of the Christian era, rather than the iron-bound Judæo-Roman theology, which began to dominate Christian intelligence with the advent of the stern Roman system of jurisprudence in the fourth and fifth centuries, and which has cast its black shadow over the creeds of Christendom more or less ever since.

A story illustrating these two schools of thought, the two opposing currents of feeling in regard to the divine method, is supplied to me by a valued contributor, Mr. J. W. Brown, of Oamaru, New Zealand.

Mr. Brown, in sending me the story, vouches for it as being original, and as having occurred in his own experience. But I had better let him narrate the anecdote in his own way. Thus he writes:

'On a Sacrament Sabbath afternoon in the town of Kinross, two old Scotchmen with myself were walking down the street, having just left the U.P. Church, where we had partaken of the *Saacrament*, which was followed by what might be called a "rousing sermon,"

the hearers of which had been, metaphorically speaking, shaken over the mouth of the *Pit* to realise its terrors.

'One of these old men, named Jamie Murray, was dressed in the old-fashioned blue coat, with bright brass buttons, knee-breeches, and broad blue bonnet with a red toorie on the top. He was of the severe, stern, unyielding, true blue type, which characterised so many of the heroes of the Covenant, and the sermon was as marrow to his bones. Not so, however, to his companion, Willie Blackwood, a man with the heart of a woman and the nature of a child, sensitive and tender as a flower.

'"What do you think o' that sermon, Jamie?" said Willie, as we slowly wended our way down the street. "Think o't?" said Jamie; "man, it was jist a grand sermon. I havena heard ane I likit better for mony a day. What do you think o't yersel'?" "Ae, man," said Willie, "it was an awfu' sermon, a fearfu' sermon. It fair gar'd my flesh a' grue. I am a' shiverin' yet, and I'm sure I canna tak' ony denner." "What!" said Jamie, with a snort of indignation. "What do ye want? What wad ye hae, man? Do ye want the man to slide ye doon tae hell on a buttered plate?"'

That this gloomy theology is on the wane I think may be safely predicted when we find our modern incumbents of Scottish pulpits more and more insisting on the power of love as an element in human redemption rather than fear. I was glad to see that that genial humorist and kindly Christian minister, Dr. Cameron Lees, has recently given utterance to much the same views. So I gather, at least, from the following extract which I cut out of an Australian newspaper not long ago.

The speech was made, seemingly, at some annual dinner in Edinburgh, Lord Provost Russell presiding.

'Rev. Dr. Cameron Lees, replying to "The Clergy," which was proposed by Sir Thomas Clark, said he observed a considerable change coming over the Church. He thought that, for one thing, the Scottish clergy were becoming mellower and more human than when he first remembered them. They were becoming less theological and more practical, and they were preaching shorter sermons. The other day he heard a young Scottish minister defined as "a man that wore a soft hat and a dog-collar, and believed in nae hell." He did not know whether that was the case or not, but he thought there was a considerable change coming over a great portion of the Scottish clergy from the time he first knew them—a change which would make the Provost of Dingwall and the assessor for that burgh weep the bitterest tears. They must all rejoice that the clergy of Scotland were becoming more tolerant and more charitable, that—he was giving his own experience—they were becoming more tolerant of one another's opinions, and they were inclined much more than they were twenty years ago to believe that a man might differ from them in many ways, and yet that he might be of the same real spirit—that however outwardly they might differ, they might be entirely at one in reality and in truth. That was the spirit which was growing every day, and, believing as he did in toleration and in charity, he rejoiced at it."

I remember that the length of the sermons was truly

a weariness and a real physical hardship to children of tender years. Yet we were supposed to maintain an apparently keen attention and a simulated interest in the lucubrations given from the pulpit. Surely, I have since thought, this was simply putting a premium on hypocrisy; and many of the pawky illustrations of Scottish humour turn on the sort of half-indignant, half-contemptuous protest against the orthodox conventionalism which really was abhorrent to the true nature of those who had to bow down under the burden of that unwholesome régime.

Dear old Dr. Kinross, the esteemed and much-loved Principal of Saint Andrew's College, New South Wales, in the course of conversation, gave me rather a telling instance of the extreme intolerance and rigid Calvinism of the old régime. One fast-day he was going to church with his father, and he spied some fine gooseberries, and boylike said: 'Eh, what fine grossarts; I would like some.' Whereon he got a most solemn rebuke for allowing such worldly thoughts to intrude on his mind on the sacred fast-day. He told me, further, that one minister of his acquaintance, having heard that some of his flock had attended a roup of corn on the Saturday preceding the Sacrament, wanted to exclude them from the Communion on that account. My own dear old mother was exceedingly strict in her Sabbatarianism, and I remember once getting a good dose of the tawse from her for having picked some mignonette in our garden on the Sabbath day. My genial father ventured mildly to expostulate, but she very effectually combated his liberal tendencies by vehemently assuring him that she was acting on strictly

scriptural lines, and hinted that if she 'spared the rod she would surely spoil the child.'

'But how can ye reconcile it with the Scripture?' said my father.

'Perfectly well, Robert,' she answered. 'Does not the good Book enjoin, "Thou shalt not take thy pleasure on God's holy day," and fat's pickin' flooers but takin' yer pleesure, I would like tae ken?'

Of course that settled the matter; but in any case, if my mother was hard put to it for a vindication of her maternal authority towards my unfortunate self, she had always one clincher, and it was this:

'Aweel, if he's no deservin' his "licks" the noo, he's sure tae be need'n't before vera lang.'

Now there can be little doubt, as Principal Kinross has told me, as the result of his own observation during his long experience of tuition, that one of the evil effects of this absurd ultra strictness and iron-bound rigour was to cause young people to revolt against their thraldom at the first opportunity. Thus, when they left the paternal roof, they were apt to become more loose in both profession and practice than if they had been accustomed to a more reasonable discipline when they were young.

The following illustration of strict Sabbath observance is taken from a choice collection of anecdotes called *Scotch Folk*.

'Onything unusual on the Sawbath, ye can understan', wad be verra readily noticed in a parish like that [Dundonald]. I mind ance there was a cattle-dealer or drover body came owre frae Arran or thereawa to buy beasts in the parish. He stayed maist feck o' a week,

an' sud hae gaen hame on the Saturday, but missed 'e boat, an' so there was naething for't but he maun stay owre 'e Sawbath. He pit up at the public; there was nae hairm in that, for he was a dacent man 'at keepit the public, an' he keepit a drap gude drink. Weel, on the Sawbath mornin' some o' us were on our way to the kirk, an' when we were passin' the public we could hardly believe oor een or oor lugs; there was the body stannin' i' the middle o' the road, *whustlin'*! Yes, whustlin' on that day! We stood still an' jist leukit at him, for we were perfectly dumfoonert. We leukit at him an' he leukit at huz. At last ane o' us axed him if he kent whaten a day this was, an' if he did, what he meant by whustlin' on't. The nasty body gied them some chat, when, 'od, they yokit on him an' gied him a most awfu' lounerin'. He deserved it, an', fegs, he got it. I'm thinkin' he'll no whustle for a while again on that day. We then gaed on to the kirk, but, efter we had gaen on a bit, I began to tak' pity on the craitur, an' gaed back to see how he was. I fand him lying in the sheuch by the roadside, gey ill hurt, for they had lickit him sair. I set him up on his end on the edge o' the sheuch and began to quastion him in a kin'ly way, jist to show him that I had nae grudge against himsel', but only against his conduct. I axed him whaur he cam' frae, an' he said frae Arran. I axed him then what for he wasna gaun to the kirk. He said he didna understan' English weel, as if that was ony excuse. Ane can get a heap o' gude frae gaun to the kirk, without muckle understanin' o' what's said. I then axed him what he meant by whustlin' on that day; did he not know that it was wrong? He

said he was whustlin' on his dowg, as if that made ony difference neither.'

The bareness of the Scottish ritual, too, of the old school, and the wearisome lengthy sermons and services, tended to create a distaste for church-going which is much to be regretted. Here is an anecdote about Dr. Kidd of Aberdeen. One of his hearers was an old wifey who kept a 'cheenge-hoose,' but she regularly attended the Doctor's kirk, and being wearied with much service during the week, she often fell asleep in church. One day the old Doctor was preaching as usual rather lengthily when his ear caught a rather stentorian snore. His eagle eye, following the lead thus given, lit on the flushed face of the portly cheenge-hoose keeper placidly slumbering in her pew. With a touch of humour which was not at all uncommon in the pulpit in those days, he called out in a loud tone, 'Anither half-mutchkin, mem!'

'Comin', sir,' cries the wife, starting up at the well-known summons, and then blushing purple with chagrin to find herself in the kirk, the centre of some hundreds of pairs of observant eyes. Then the good Doctor pointed the moral by showing how eager many folk were to acquire worldly wealth, but alas! how careless they seemed to be about getting the true riches.

I have heard of an old innkeeper who, being somewhat of a diplomatist, had tried to make the best of two worlds by getting himself nominated as an elder in some northern parish. It so happened that while a fast-day was being held in his own parish there were some Highland sports in a populous glen on the other side of the range, for which he had acquired the right

of erecting a booth and of dispensing refreshments, quite unaware at the time that the fast-day in his own parish would fall on the same date. Having paid a tidy sum for the right to sell liquor at the gathering, he did not like to forgo the prospect of a lucrative day's trade : but at the same time he felt that it would never do for him, an elder of the kirk, to be found absent from his ecclesiastical duties on the important occasion of a fast-day. He compromised matters with his conscience by sending his eldest daughter, a big, gawkie, sonsie lass, to look after the till and attend to the takings in the booth. Subsequently this became known and was the subject of much adverse comment by those who were not kindly disposed towards him. Under pressure from the unco-guid among the congregation, the pawky innkeeper was summoned before the session to explain his alleged inconsistent conduct. When the charge had been duly stated to him, that he, an elder of the kirk, had been guilty of keeping open a booth and dispensing liquor on a solemn fast-day (although in a neighbouring parish), he was asked what he had to say in defence. He at once owned the truth of the impeachment so far as the sale of liquor was concerned, but pleaded that the engagement had been made long prior to the fixture of the date for a fast-day ; and also that he himself did not personally take any part in the ungodly traffic. One of his opponents at once retorted, 'Yes, but ye sent yer dauchter Meg to represent ye.'

'Ah but,' said the innkeeper with a humorous twinkle in his eye, 'Meg's no a kirk member, ye ken ; she's no even convairtet yet.'

Whether this *apologia* secured his absolution or not I cannot say, but the logical defence was rather ingenious.

While on this topic I must tell a story of how Wullie White cheated the craws. Wullie was a douce hard-working small farmer not far from 'Inglismaldie,' a grand old manor-house near the North Esk, about halfway between our village and Montrose. The woods of Inglismaldie were famous all over the Mearns as being the haunt of myriads of rooks, which have taken up their quarters there for many generations.

These noisy predatory birds were a sore trial to many of the humble agriculturists of the neighbourhood, on whose potato patches the greedy cawing rooks levied blackmail. Just about ripening time they would settle in great swart flocks, undeterred by scarecrows or most of the ordinary methods adopted by farmers to avert their depredations. On Sundays especially their powers for mischief seemed to be directed by a truly demoniacal energy. They seemed to know the esteem in which the day was held by the common folk of the country-side. It almost looked as if they knew the bent of mind which led the farmers to esteem the day particularly sacred, so that on Sunday they were free from sling, or gun, or dangerous missile of any kind. At all events, on two or three successive Sundays they had swooped down with beak and talon on poor Wullie's potatoes until half his crop had been destroyed by their infernal misdirected energy. Ordinary human nature could stand it no longer. Casting all his traditional reverence for the Sabbath to the winds, Wullie determined that he would be revenged on the black

robbers who had so despoiled him. So ramming his old blunderbuss nearly to the muzzle with slugs and rusty nails, he determined 'to chance' the wrath of the minister for his Sabbath desecration, and stealing down to the potato field behind the dykes, he rested his murderous weapon on the top of the sod wall, and blazed right into the heart of the assembled mass of cawing rooks. With a hoarse, clamorous uproar the whole legion arose in heavy flight, perfectly dumfoundered at such an unwonted desecration of the day of rest. Wheeling round in bewildered circles, they at length seemed to make up their minds that this chance attack must have been a mistake, and so they settled down again to their work of spoliation. Wullie, in the meantime, had not been idle. Again he had rammed home the murderous charge, and again he 'let fly' at his greedy glossy enemies. With a perfectly deafening clamour the black marauders arose this time, and, led by some patriarchal rooks, they winged their slow flight in the direction of their ancestral oaks; whereupon, Wullie, slapping the butt of his gun, gave vent to a grim chuckle of satisfaction, and, referring to the evident way in which he had perplexed the crows, and put them out of their reckoning, he said:

'Sa'l! ye black deevils. A'm thinkin' I've ravelled yer calendar this time.'

In reference to the frequent drowsiness which overtook the wearied peasantry in church, a good anecdote, which well illustrates this widely-prevalent weakness, is as follows:

Two Highlanders have just met after a long separation, and over the inevitable whisky are recalling past

doings and ancient friendships. Says one: 'You'll maype no mind Tonal' Macintyre? Tid you know him?'

'Tid I know Tonal' Macintyre?' responded the other with fine irony. 'Tid I know him?' 'Tidn't Tonal' Macintyre an' me sleep thegether in the same kirk for fufteen years, ay, an' more!' This put the matter of their mutual acquaintanceship quite beyond the shadow of a doubt.

I have already adverted to the length and dreariness of the sermons, but, indeed, even the prayers were, as a rule, spun out to the same inordinate lengths. Many of the olden-time Scottish clergy had, in fact, set forms of prayer, which were just as much liturgical as any of the written prayers of the Episcopal service, against which so many fulminations were directed. The same phrases, the same petitions, the same confessions, the same thanksgivings, and the self-same, all-embracing supplications 'for all sorts and conditions of men, for high and low, for young and old, for rich and poor, from the king on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill,' etc. etc., were poured forth, absolutely without variation, Sabbath after Sabbath, from one year's end to the other. This is well illustrated by a remark of one old worshipper, who, complaining of her advancing infirmities rendering her less able than formerly to enjoy the services, said: 'she could only manage to stand throwe the meenister's lang prayers,' by resting on one leg during one half of the compendious supplications, and changing to the other leg during the second half. 'She aye kenned fin the prayer wis hulf dune, an' fin the time cam' tae cheenge legs,' as she put it; 'for,'

she continued, 'aye fin he comes tae the "ingetherin' o' the Gentiles," I jist cheenge ma fit.'

Rather a pathetic illustration of this pulpit peculiarity comes to my mind, wherein a 'wearifu' dreich' preacher of this familiar type figures. He had received a hasty summons to attend at the house of one of his hearers, whose only boy, a fine little fellow, lay sore stricken and almost at the point of death. The sleek, bovine-natured 'moderate' could not take in the situation at all. His ease-loving, sluggish, unemotional nature could not realise the human tragedy that was being enacted before him. He looked at the case from a purely conventional and professional standpoint. He had been sent for 'to pray over a sick bairn,' and that was all. So he began in the usual, hard, matter-of-fact, professional way, to offer up his customary petition. The anguished heart of the poor father was aching for a living word of cheer and hope; and instead of a direct simple appeal for pity to the great loving heart of Him who said, 'Suffer little children to come unto Me,' here was the usual cut-and-dry, humdrum string of practically meaningless statements and platitudes which the unctuous minister had ready for each and every emergency. At length, when he had mumbled and maundered half through and got to the usual formula about 'the convairshun o' Thy auncient people the Jews,' the pent-up agony of the grief-stricken father could stand it no longer, and he ventured to remonstrate. 'Oh man! man!' he groaned; 'it's ma ain yae bairn the noo. Can ye no lat the Jews alane for yince?'

Perhaps no better illustration could be given of

the dogged, unquestioning conservatism of the old generation than the following anecdote, related to me on the best authority, and told of a well-known character—old John Aitken, who officiated for nearly a whole lifetime as beadle of Albion Chapel, City Wall, London. When poor John lay dying he called his son to his bedside to receive his last injunctions. One of his dearest desires had long been that his son might be chosen as his successor in the office which he had himself so long filled. 'Noo, John,' said the old patriarch; 'noo, John, I'm dee'in'. I've been beadle o' Albion Chapel fifty-twa years, John, an' when I'm gane they may ca' on ye tae tak' ma place, John. Noo, ma son, I hiv only yae bit o' advice tae gie ye.' Then in the most solemn and impressive accents he said, 'Resist a' impruvements.'

The same John might well have been the hero of the following, which appeared some time ago in the *Kilmarnock Standard*—a capital paper for good, racy, Scottish anecdotes, several of which have been sent me by a good friend in New Zealand—Mr. Kirkwood. Here is the anecdote.

A parish church was recently being beautified by the insertion of a memorial stained-glass window. The old beadle, who was a confirmed grumbler, looked for some time at the operations of the glaziers while inserting the window. The minister, seeing John thus intently gazing, turned to him and said: 'Well, John, what is your opinion of our new window?' 'Well, sir,' was the reply, 'in my opinion they micht hae been contented wi' the gless as God made it.'

The oft-told story of the strange minister hesitating to pronounce the benediction because the congregation, contrary to custom, still retained their seats, when a grave elder reassured him by quietly saying: 'Say awa', sir; we're jist sittin' tae cheat the dowgs,' originated, I believe, in my grandfather's church. At all events the dogs in our glen were just as constant attenders at church as were their owners; and I am told the incident occurred there.

An old beadle on one occasion sought to encourage a modest young probationer in whom he thought he observed signs of extreme nervousness. 'Young man,' said the old veteran, 'dinna be fleyed o' nervishness. Look at me; fin I took up the Bible the first twa or three times, I wis unco nervish masel', but I sune got owre't.'

Here is another. An old lady, who considered herself a great theological authority, had been hearing a sermon from a stranger minister which she did not consider 'soond.' On coming out of the church she was confronted by the deacon in charge of the plate, who rather ostentatiously obtruded it on her notice, knowing her to be wealthy. She waved him and it aside with a dignified and indignant sniff, saying: 'No, sir! I shall not give money for that which is not bread.'

Here is another good illustration of pulpit eccentricity which I cut out of the *Montrose Directory Almanac* some years ago. It is entitled

AN ECCENTRIC MINISTER

Early in the last century, the minister of Arbroath was Mr. Ferguson, a man remarkable for freedom of speech, even in the pulpit, where he sometimes gave great offence by his plain, apposite illustrations. Amongst them are the following: Lecturing one Sunday upon Zaccheus climbing the tree to see Jesus, he said: 'This Zaccheus, my friends, was a *wee bodie*, just such another as our carlie of a gauger sitting there,' pointing with his finger to the quarter of the kirk where the exciseman was seated. His freedom of speech and eccentricity of manner being matters of public notoriety, his discourses were often attended by strangers, from motives of curiosity. One day, when mounting the pulpit, he observed that the front seat of the magistrates' gallery was occupied by a party of gentlemen from Montrose. Their faces were not unknown to Mr. Ferguson, who read out as the subject of his discourse: 'Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land you are come'; from which he took the opportunity of giving the strangers a sound drubbing, for what he termed idle, profane, and impertinent curiosity. Warming with his subject, he addressed his congregation in the following peroration: 'But my instructions are despised, and my warnings are in vain: ye are wicked people—workers of iniquity, and I know not to whom I can compare you, for you are worse than Sodom, yea, your wickedness is nearly equal to that of Montrose; it has ascended to heaven, and drawn down vengeance on your heads; you have provoked the Almighty to visit you with great and sin-

gular judgments, for since your last election He has cut off your magistracy root and branch; all are carried away captive by death, and there remains not one to bear rule in the city, except that drunken beast Bailie H—— there where he sits!'

Here is one in which the minister was treated to a piece of very plain criticism, though whether it was meant to be uncomplimentary I cannot say. At any rate, an exchange of pulpits in Aberdeenshire had been arranged, and one of the ministers, wending his way slowly toward the church where he was to officiate, overtook an old woman with whom he had a speaking acquaintance, and accosted her. She at once recognised him, and said:

'Eh, sir! are ye tae be preachin' for his the day?'

'Yes.'

'An' is oor meenister tae be preachin' i' your kirk?'

'Yes.'

'Ay than' (with great gusto), 'your fowk 'll be gettin' a rael traet the day, I'm thinkin'!'

My own dear father was emphatically an able preacher. He made no pretensions to ornate eloquence, but his discourses were pregnant with deep earnestness and fervour, and were practical, sometimes homely, but always honest, reverent, and composed with care. At first, and indeed as long as I remained under the parental roof, there was no vestry attached to the church. My father accordingly robed himself at the manse; and the singular spectacle used to be presented of the tall minister in full Geneva gown and bands, with his black hat always slightly tilted on one side (he detested a hard-rimmed hat, and on week-days always

wore a soft felt headpiece), marching up the village street, accompanied by his active, energetic little spouse, 'linkit' arm-in-arm, and followed in motley array by his numerous progeny of boys, with their one stately sister, who had her hands quite full in trying to marshal the straggling procession into something like decorous orderliness. One never-forgotten ceremony had always to be gone through before leaving the manse. We each had served out to us a 'penny for the plate,' and the pennies were provided every Saturday by the minister himself, who 'cheenged a shillin'' for the purpose at John Carr's shop. This was never neglected even when the good old couple were so poor as scarcely to be able to provide food and clothing for their children.

While on the subject of kirks and preachings I might record an example of that sort of Scottish anecdote which so often passes current in the colonies as a specimen of real Scottish humour, but which I cannot help thinking is altogether spurious, or at least of foreign manufacture. It is to the effect that a minister of the old school, happening to observe during his sermon that nearly all the congregation were asleep, paused, and thus aroused the sleepers; then resuming, he said: 'Freens, I'm ashamed o' ye! For therty years I hiv been preachin' hell fire to ye, an' ye're a' asleep. If ye dinna behave better, I'll hae to tak' to preachin' eternal frost an' sna' tae ye, an' see if that 'll keep ye wauken!'

Now, such a story may have a certain point in it as being in some sort an attempt at satire on the old brimstone theology; but as an instance of genuine Scottish humour I do not think it would deceive even a Chinaman, much less 'one of the elect.'

CHAPTER XIV

The Sturdy, Self-reliant Spirit of the Older Generation contrasted with Modern Querulousness—An Unpromising Farm—Geordie Ferrier, the Minister's Man — Co-operative Farming Fifty Years ago—A Farmer-Minister—Geordie's Peculiarities—The Drucken Barber and the Minister—Wattie Dunlop and the Barber—My Father's Fairness—A Grannie's Benediction—My Father's Strong Common-sense—A Disconcerted Fop—Characteristics of my Father and Mother—A Standing Joke—My Mother's Deep Piety and Keen Wit—Her Belief in Direct Answer to Prayer—An Authentic Instance—Her Earnestness and Humour—Her Sense of Duty—Contempt of Meanness—Quaint Criticism on Preaching—Her Farewell Charge to me.

For many years after the great Disruption my father's salary from all official sources, as I have already said, could not have exceeded in the best of years about £130, and the average must have been more nearly £100. This was little enough, in all conscience, to feed, clothe, and educate the large growing family; yet I am not aware that my father ever bemoaned his hard lot, or sought any solace in weak repining and maudlin appeals to the sympathy of friends. He certainly must have had a brave buoyant spirit, not easily daunted; and he was ably seconded in his endeavours to maintain

his independence by the self-denying, energetic, and resourceful helpmeet whom he had chosen. I only venture to mention these points of disposition, as they were strongly characteristic of a very large class of Scottish fathers and mothers of the past generation. And surely the example which was set in many such a home as our humble manse has been productive of results such as might put altogether to shame the pitiful repining which, alas! seems all too common among the degenerate descendants whom one meets with nowadays in many parts. Nothing is more common than to hear well-to-do people, possessed of infinitely greater resources than fell to the lot of their fathers and grandfathers, querulously bemoaning their hard lot, indulging in the mean luxury of morbid self-commiseration, till their moral fibre seems to be reduced to a pulp; and instead of training their children to look upon self-help as the greatest motor, and self-reliance as the supreme economic virtue, they moan and whine and wail over petty difficulties, that would only have nerved the sturdier and braver spirits of the older generation to increased effort. Indeed, one is often almost sickened to see the nerveless, spineless, and spiritless exhibitions which are made by parents nowadays when they are called upon squarely to face the problem of their children's settlement in life; and for the behoof of such I am constrained to put on record what otherwise I might not have touched upon in these recollections, viz. the sturdy, self-reliant spirit in which my good old father and mother set to work to make the best of their poor circumstances. After the persecuting old laird had died, my father succeeded in getting

from his successor, the Hon. Fox Maule, a lease of some wild waste moorland, which had never felt the plough, and was covered with gorse and broom, and looked about as bare and uninviting a piece of land as could well be imagined. My father, however, succeeded in securing the services of an honest and efficient man, dear old Geordie Ferrier, who for over thirty years was a faithful and trusty servant, in whom my father found an invaluable and ever-willing co-worker in carrying out all his schemes and agricultural experiments.

A ramshackle collocation of tumble-down huts on the outskirts of the village constituted our farm-steading, consisting of barn, byres, stables, cornyard, courts, and cattle-sheds; and from the furthest date back to which my memory can carry me I remember the ingenuity with which my father and Geordie patched up and repaired these tumble-down structures, for they themselves were too poor and the laird was too stingy ever to provide such steading accommodation as was suitable. The farm in all consisted of perhaps about ninety acres, for the most part stony, whinny moorland of the most unpromising character; but my father, in addition to a brave heart, had a good head and sound judgment, and he was thoroughly acquainted with all the latest scientific advances in agriculture. Indeed, by the end of his nineteen years' lease he had turned his unpromising holding into a perfect model farm, which was the admired of all competent beholders. Geordie, and his son 'little Geordie,' worked two pairs of horses with 'an orra horse for the gig and odd jobs.' The gig was a luxury that only came after many weary years of

hard work, during which my father trudged on foot through the length and breadth of his wide and scattered parish. 'Jock,' the gig horse, was one of the first presents he got from his attached flock. It may give my readers some idea of the bitterly virulent feelings that raged at the time, when I state that some despicable blackguard went to the length of trying to cripple the poor inoffensive beast by driving a nail into the frog of one of its hoofs right through the quick. On several occasions similar dastardly attempts were made, presumably by those who differed from my father in their opinions, to maim his cattle and destroy his crops. Never once did my father complain. He was too noble-minded; and it is satisfactory to know that in after-years these feelings must have entirely disappeared. Latterly, he possessed the most loving and affectionate esteem of every one for miles round about, whether they belonged to his own congregation or not.

I think my father was one of the first to practise subsoil drainage on a large scale in these northern counties; and by dint of incessant hard work, and the application, for the first time in the Mearns I believe, of lime and other chemical constituents to the soil, he brought his farm into a high state of tillage, so that it returned him a handsome recompense for all the toil he had expended upon it.

Looking back now from the vantage-ground of modern successful experiments, I cannot help feeling proud of the strong earnest faith, the shrewd prescience and practical common sense which characterised my father's methods of working. For instance, we hear a

lot nowadays of co-operative farming. Well, more than fifty years ago my father practised it with success. When he had reclaimed a stretch of stony moorland from its pristine unproductiveness, he let it out to any villagers who might wish to cultivate a portion suited to their requirements; but on conditions which, while attractive enough to the villager, were yet ultimately profitable to the tenant-farmer, in this case my father. Thus any weaver, for instance, or cottager in the village was allowed to take a crop of potatoes from the land simply on condition that he thoroughly manured the plot, kept it clean from weeds, and removed the stones. Well, there were dozens of poor people in the village who were very glad to collect dung from the market muir, wheel out their ashes and house refuse, and fertilise their plots with these composts. The children, in their leisure intervals, were set to work to pick up the stones with which they filled the open drains made by Geordie and his assistants; and in this way, by the end of two or three years, the barren whinny muir had been transformed into rich arable fields, from which splendid crops were obtained. Afterwards, the liberal application of lime and bone-dust enabled my father to raise crops that, while they were the envy of all the surrounding farmers, were an object-lesson inspiring them to go and do likewise. In this way the old minister was undoubtedly doing most valuable educative work in the midst of his parish. Every Saturday, too, for many many years, he allowed Geordie or one of his boys to take in the cart to Brechin and bring out coals, or lime, or such heavy bulk goods as could not well be brought out by the parcel cart of the postman. These

commodities—coal, slates, manures, etc.—Geordie was allowed to sell, or charge a reasonable freight for their carriage, and if my father got all expenses paid, Geordie was allowed to retain a certain share of the balance. In this way my father supplied a much-felt want in the village, secured the goodwill and affection of a valued servant in Geordie, and set an example of co-operative enterprise which, during the many years in which this kindly system was practised, did much to beget cordial relationships between master and man, the beneficial effects of which extended far beyond the limits of the parish in which this mutually-helpful and considerate system had been inaugurated. My father never thought it beneath the dignity of a clergyman to do as the brave old missionary apostle did, 'work with his own hands to supply his necessities.' I can still see him in my mind's eye, with his brown felt hat and in his shirt-sleeves, holding the plough, driving the cart, wielding the scythe or flail—in fact taking his pleasure in all the daily toil of the farm, and yet never for a moment neglecting his ministerial duties or forgetting that he was a scholarly gentleman. Poor Geordie, with most people, had a most irascible temper, but the affectionate love he bore to my father was really something touching. They had a sincere regard for each other; and though Geordie occasionally (generally about the half-yearly market time) indulged in a wild carouse, I do not suppose that a harsh word ever fell from my father's lips in regard to any of his peccadilloes. My mother was not so patient, and she could not forgo that satisfaction which is so dear to the average good woman of 'improving the occasion'

when 'men are overtaken in a fault'; so that after one of Geordie's periodic outbursts there was nothing he had a greater dread of than to undergo the inevitable jobation from my mother, who always got at him when he was 'suffering a recovery,' and made him feel the keen edge of her upbraiding eloquence.

On one such occasion, when my mother had been more than ordinarily indignant with the poor, penitent, unnerved victim of too much whisky and too little self-control, he ventured on a mild remonstrance. Geordie had come down to the manse to get some necessary orders about the farm work, which had been, during the market week, allowed to get sadly in arrears. My mother had already tackled him, and made him feel very much ashamed of himself, but she could not deny herself the luxury of again 'improving the occasion' while Geordie was waiting for my father to come from his study. When the good minister at length appeared, Geordie looked up to his master and said: 'Oh, minister, cud ye no arreenge, for heeven's sake, tae lat the mistress hae the poopit tae hersel' on Sunday, and let's hae a' this oot at aince?'

My mother had always a keen sense of humour, and this pleaded for Geordie now more powerfully than anything else could have done. Shaking her head at him, she just said, 'Ah, Geordie, if the meenister wis only half as hard on ye as I am, ye would be a better character.' And so that particular half-yearly spree was for the time condoned.

This was, however, about Geordie's one fault. In all other respects he was a leal-hearted, faithful, hard-working, noble fellow, and treated us boys just as if we

were his own children. If we needed correction he did not hesitate to administer it, and withal he was intensely fond of us, and we always exhibited to him deep affection and unbounded trust. From the farm we were of course supplied with milk, meal, potatoes, and meat. At Martinmas a young 'cattle beast,' as it was called, was generally killed and salted down as part of the winter provender. In one or other of the 'ley parks,' as the grazing paddocks were called in that part of Scotland, my father generally had two or three score of sheep fattening, and one of these would be occasionally killed as wanted. But for this welcome addition to the minister's scanty stipend, it would have fared badly many a time and oft with the manse commissariat. All this, of course, was the work of long years, during which my father and mother suffered cruel hardships. Indeed, at times, as I have already indicated, we were but one narrow remove from downright destitution; but there was never a whimper of complaint from the brave-hearted couple. With patient fortitude they performed the daily duties of their hard life, and even when the cupboard and larder were bare indeed, the appeal of those poorer than themselves was never allowed to pass unregarded. When a child, I have known my father and mother go without their dinner themselves, that some poor sick creature in the village might have a meal; but certainly they never let their right hand know what the left hand did.

In speaking of Geordie's periodic sprees, I am reminded of a good story concerning a village barber of like proclivities, which, though it has been already published, may be new to some of my readers. It is one of

the finest illustrations of that dry, sleek Scottish humour which we call pawky with which I am acquainted.

The barber had been completely 'on the batter.' The carouse had been heavy and prolonged. At length, with credit exhausted, the unnerved and debilitated shaver had been compelled to betake himself again to the exercise of his calling. Just then the minister, a kindly old man of the paternal school, heard that Tammas had 'sworn off the drink,' and he considered that the opportunity would now be favourable to do as my mother loved to do—that is—'improve the occasion.' Bent on this laudable professional mission, he sallied forth. On entering the humble shaving shop of the remorseful Tammas, however, his kindly heart was smitten with compunction at the sight of the wreck before him. Poor Tammas, indeed, looked a melancholy spectacle. Trembling with unstrung nerves, shaking as if in a palsy, his bleared, bloodshot eyes looked up piteously at the minister, who, inly thinking that it was 'no good pouring water on a drowned rat,' swiftly determined to spare poor Tammas for the nonce, and reserve his sacerdotal censure till the poor 'disjaskit craetur' was in a better condition to profit by a good straight talking-to. He determined, therefore, to make a kindly pretence that he had come in for a shave, and sat down, feeling assured that some opportunity would presently be afforded of saying his 'word in season.'

Now Tammas was not unaware of what was passing in the simple old minister's mind, and if the truth must be told, he was not so repentant as he looked. He was assuming a good deal of the broken-down and battered

appearance which he presented. So, with a look of shamefaced penitence, with trembling fingers and in silent contrition (apparent), he proceeded to envelope the minister's neck in the towel, and then began to lather his visitor in approved tonsorial fashion. The minister eyed him with a mildly-reproachful glance, which expressed volumes to Tammas's conscious sense of guilt. Now he came to the critical part of the operation. He felt his nerves jumping, but by dint of a strong effort of will, and holding one unsteady hand with the other, he managed to bring the razor pretty deftly down the ample expanse of both the clerical chops. But alas! when the wobbling blade came to the more intricate manipulation of the double chin, the refractory nerves gave a disconcerting jerk, and lo! out gushed the crimson fluid over the snowy napkin.

Now, thought the good minister—now is my time. Here is the opportunity I have been waiting for! So, addressing the abashed-looking Tammas, who expected a torrent of indignant wrath, the simple, kindly man just ventured on a very mild remonstrance. 'Ah, Tammas,' said he, 'ye see what the effects o' strong drink are noo!'

Tammas's spirits at once rose. He knew the worst was past, and his ready humour came to the rescue in a flash of inspiration, as very demurely, but with a spice of lurking drollery, he gravely replied:

'Deed ay, meenister! It mak's the skin unco tender!'

One story of course brings on another. I must, therefore, tell an anecdote, that I am not aware has ever

been in print, of the famous Wattie Dunlop and a village barber. This witty and eccentric divine has been the hero of numberless anecdotes, but the scene of the following is in the hamlet of Glencairn, in Dumfriesshire. The village barber there was an original oddity who went generally by the name of Shaver Morton. The Reverend Wattie had an engagement to preach at Glencairn, and as he arrived late on the Saturday night, after somewhat long and weary travel, some thoughtful soul suggested that Morton should be sent for to shave the tired minister, so that he might get up fresh on Sunday morning and be spared a lot of tedious toilet preparations. The kindly suggestion was acted on at once, and, late as was the hour, Shaver Morton was sent for. Being taken from his Saturday night's toddy, the worthy barber was not in a particularly gracious mood, and he certainly had not provided himself with a properly-prepared razor. The razor, in fact, was direfully blunt. However, he proceeded to operate on Mr. Dunlop's chin, and the first sweep of the weapon drew certain tiny little streaks on the tender flesh, accompanied by an involuntary start and smothered exclamation from the victim. With much assumed solicitude, the shaver asked Wattie, as he bent over him :

'Is't sair, sir?'

'Weel,' responded Wattie, who now thoroughly apprehended the situation, 'it's sair, an' it's no sair. If it's flayin', it's no sair; but if it's shavin', it's just awfu!'

As an instance of my father's manner with boys, and his sense of fairness, I may narrate an incident

which happened one day while he was engaged with Dr. Foote in examining a school. The two ministers had taken the Latin class, but for a moment my father's attention had been diverted to something or other taking place in another part of the school. Willie Alexander of Brechin, my informant, who was well up in his class, and anxious to get the prize, ventured, by way of mild reminder, to gently touch my father's foot with his own. My brother Jack was in the same class, and about equal in attainments with Willie. My father, feeling the pressure on his foot, became instantly alert, and fancying it was his own boy Jack who had thus tried to engage his attention, turned at once to him, with a humorous shake of the head, and said :

'Ah, Jack, wad ye? Weel, you'll no get the prize ; you've no right, sir, to try and take any unfair advantage.' Poor Jack was nonplussed, and it was long after before the pawky Willie enlightened him.

As a companion picture to the parting words addressed to me by my mother, which the reader will find chronicled further on, I might here mention a very characteristic utterance addressed to my friend Jim Alexander by his grannie, an ancient dame aged ninety-nine at the time she said it. Master Jim had been brought in to receive the dear old lady's parting benediction, which she thus delivered :

'Weel, Jamie, keep yer soul clean, laddie, an' yer nose up, an' there's nae fear o' ye.'

Another instance of my father's sound common sense and contempt of all conventionality is the following. The above-mentioned Willie Alexander met him in the village

one day, but he was carrying a long ladder on his shoulder, and although he saw that Willie wished to speak to him, he calmly held on his way until he reached the manse, when, putting down the ladder by the side of the house, he turned to the observant laddie, who had been somewhat surprised at seeing the minister thus engaged, and said, with a merry twinkle in his eye, 'Oh, never mind the ladder, my mannie. If I had stopped to speak or to shak' hands wi' ilka body that wanted to speak to me, or lauched at me, I wad jist hae been a pairfeck nuisance. Na, na, laddie, it's no weel gossipin' wi' a lang ladder on yer shouther.'

He used to tell, with great glee, a story of a certain pompous, pretentious fellow who had left his native place, gone south, and got on pretty well in the world. He bore the patronymic of Smith; and after a considerable absence he took a run down to his native parish to enjoy the sense of his own importance by showing off his airs and graces before his former rural acquaintances. He was dressed in the height of fashion, and allowed himself all sorts of ridiculous affectations. Meeting an old farmer, who had known his very, very humble antecedents, he accosted him in rather a patronising sort of fashion, thus:

'Haw, Mistaw Mollison, and how do *you* do?'

'Od, sir, ye hae the better o' me,' said the farmer, for the moment nonplussed.

'Aw, don't you remember me? I'm Mistaw George Smith.'

'Ou ay!' said the farmer very drily, 'I behaud ye noo. Wisna yer mither henwife at Dun?'

It must have been seen from the foregoing, and I could multiply instances indefinitely, that both my father and mother had a keen sense of humour and a happy philosophy which led them to look generally on the brighter side of things; and though times must have often been very hard for them, they had such perfect love for and confidence in each other, that I do not believe in all the long course of their married life there was ever a serious difference of opinion between them, and I do not think even a harsh word was said by the one to the other. My mother was active both in mind and body—full of nervous energy—capable of long-sustained effort, and she was a wonderful manager. How could she have been otherwise, to bring up her large family of nine boys and one daughter on the slender stipend of a Free Kirk minister? When I was born my dear father was only in receipt of some £130 per annum, afterwards reduced on account of the appointment of a colleague to £90; and even when the Sustentation Fund—that noble evidence of the liberality and loyalty to conscience of the Scottish Free Churchmen—was in full working order, his annual income could not have exceeded some £150. In all his straits and difficulties he managed to keep up the payments of his Life Insurance policy, the only provision he could make for his life's partner. He managed to keep out of debt, although at the sacrifice of many little comforts, which by most men in his station would be looked on as necessaries. His family were well educated, and, thanks to mother's clever management, we were always well fed—with homely fare, it is true, but meal, potatoes, and herrings have been the provender

on which many a good man and true has been nurtured in our Scottish homes.

One favourite joke, which the good old minister never lost a chance of repeating, was in allusion to the number of his family. Any chance visitor coming to the manse and seeing the great noisy troop of boys playing about, would almost to a certainty make some such remark as this: 'Dear me, Mr. Inglis, what a number of fine boys you have. How many are there?' To which my father's invariable reply was: 'Well, sir, I have nine boys, and every one of them has a sister.' Of course we only had the one sister between us; but the puzzled visitor would generally manifest his astonished commiseration by holding up his hands and exclaiming, 'Dear, dear me! What a family! nine boys and nine girls.' Presently the laugh would follow at his own expense, when the minister explained the harmless little joke.

My mother was a woman of large faith. She was notably a praying woman. Her faith was of that simple unquestioning kind that is of the essence of real personal piety. To use her own expressive phraseology, and she always used the broad Scotch when under the influence of deep emotion: 'Eh, laddie,' she would say, 'I jist tell the Lord fat I want. I gang straucht till Him, an' lay a' my wants jist doon at His feet; an' *He* kens best fat's best for me, an' if it's His will I'm sure tae get it: deed ay, laddie. The Lord's no' an ill maister; an' oh He's been guid tae me; deed has He, ay, ay!' Her intense earnest convictions on the subject of prayer, and her belief in direct answers to petitions, were part of her very being. She was con-

scious of no peculiarity in her matter-of-fact way of expressing herself when she got on to this, one of her favourite themes. Indeed she was one who could treat ridicule with contempt, and her sharp-wittedness proved often quite a match, and more than a match, for the good-humoured sceptical way in which some of her friends would sometimes affect to treat her experiences. As for the open scoffer, she had a power of rebuke and withering scorn which made her a very dangerous opponent in an argument; and, sooth to say, as a debater and controversialist she was able to hold her own with most even of the learned divines who loomed large in the public eye at that time. On more than one occasion her logic and force, and extensive reading, brought her off triumphantly in an encounter with some of the keenest pulpit wits of the day who happened for the time to be visiting at our manse.

She was hot tempered to a degree; but it was just a blaze for an instant, and then her native humorous temper and punctilious honesty of disposition would lead her to see the absurdity of the situation. Her ebullitions of indignant wrath, or her fulminations against something that had excited her temper, would generally end in a hearty laugh, and the confession that perhaps she was too hasty, and 'so and so' was not so bad, perhaps, after all.

One of her favourite illustrations of her belief that God directly answered prayer was the following. It happened not long after the Disruption. I think they had taken possession of the stone cottage that had been built for them by the gifts of friends and the not less loyal services of the attached congregation, the members

of which had drawn all the building materials and given 'their labours of love' in erecting a home for their faithful minister.

Well, the good roof was overhead, but alas! the cupboard was bare, bare. My poor father's stipend had been exhausted to the last available shilling, and for some weeks to come there was no prospect of the next quarter's instalment being paid. As I have often heard the dear old lady say, 'There was naething eatable in the hoose ava, laddie, except meal; but there wasna very muckle even o' that, for the girnel was nearly toom. Yer father had been sair forfouchen trampin' through the sna', preachin' three times a week in three different pairts, and three sermons ilka Sawbath day; deed ay, laddie, he did work hard, I'm sure na'. Weel, I did not know where oor neist meal was to come from. Yer honest father wad not aloo' me to run up bills, and where to get a good dinner for you a' I did not know. Weel, Jeems, I jist took my trouble to the Lord; deed ay, laddie. I've never kent that to fail yet. I jist retired to my closet and gaed doon on my knees, and opened my hert to my blessed Master, an' I cried for food for yer father and my puir hungry children. Weel, I assure ye, I hadna lang to wait for an answer. As I was prayin' a knock cam' to the door, an' I kent as weel as if I had seen it that the Lord had provided for a' oor wants. I gaed doon stairs an' opened the door—an' there, laddie!—what do you think?—there was the gamekeeper's lathie frae 'The Burn' wi' a pair of the most beeyeutiful white winter hares ye ever set eyes on! He handed them in withoot a word, and oh, laddie, I jist returned thanks

upo' my feet, as I stood, and then away I set aff to the kitchen as hard as I could, and it wasna lang I can tell ye before I had the hares skinned and into the pat, and we had a grand brew of hare soup ready for yer father an' the rest o' ye by denner time.'

It may be explained that 'The Burn' was a beautiful quaint old manor-house and estate, lying at the foot of the glen, and belonged to the resident proprietor, Major M'Inroy. Now the Major was an adherent of the Auld Kirk—the Moderate side, and as such did not of course look with favour on my sturdy father's contumacy, as he would probably have called it; and it was the most unlikely thing that could have been thought of, for the Major to send a present of game to the Rev. Robert Inglis. It so happened, however, that the gamekeeper did not share the theological opinions of the worthy Major, but was in fact a warm and strenuous supporter of my father's side in the great controversy of the day. He was, in fact, one of his most devoted adherents. So when the Major had ordered the gamekeeper to send down two of the best hares in the bag, after a successful day's shooting, to *the* Minister, the gamekeeper very naturally thought of his own minister. My father had been minister of the parish of course before the Disruption, and indeed to the day of his death was always named *par excellence* 'THE Minister.' So in the most natural and innocent way, the boy had been told to take the hares and leave them with THE Minister, Mr. Inglis.

But now for the sequel. On his way home, it would seem that the luckless boy met the Major himself, as he was driving to the village, and a chance

inquiry made the Major aware of the miscarriage of his amiable plans on behalf of Mr. Eadie, the incumbent of the parish church. In tones of thunder he ordered the trembling boy to go back at once, and get possession of the hares, and take them to their proper destination, the manse, and hand them to The right minister this time, without further ado. The wretched, whimpering boy, not at all enamoured of his errand, and little knowing what grave issues had hung on his seemingly careless mistake, arrived back at the cottage just as the family were about to sit down to the savoury soup and stew.

Again the knock came to the door, and again my mother answered the summons. This time the poor little fellow could keep his equanimity no longer, but bursting into tears, sobbed out: 'Oh! Mistress Inglis, it's a clean mistak'!'

Explanations of course ensued. The hares could not be given back—that was plain. The poor lad was taken in and regaled with a plate of the soup he had been the instrument in providing, and then my father, having written a courteous and somewhat humorous letter of explanation to Major M'Inroy, sent off the poor messenger on his homeward way. Now, there must have been something in the letter, or in the lad's telling of the story; or possibly some hint of the straitened circumstances of the good minister's lot may have reached the laird from some outside source. Maybe, as my good old mother said, 'the Lord touched his heart'; but whatever the cause, the result was, that from that time forth many a present of game and other good things began to find its way from the house of the laird to the house of the minister, and

never afterwards were my parents' circumstances so straitened as they had been, before my good old mother had laid her case in simple faith before 'a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God.'

Let the cynic sneer as he may. I am honestly thankful to say that I have no difficulty in accepting my dear old mother's version, and sharing in her belief.

Dear simple earnest soul! How imperfectly we valued that noble, confiding trust, that genuine, unaffected piety, till the sweet, loving, gentle mother had left us. But ah! now, after the lapse of years, when we have been through the toil and turmoil, the smoke and dust of life's weary battle, we would give much to have the same calm assured trust that she had.

Sometimes, it must be confessed, the dear old lady's exhortations excited the wicked youngsters to unseemly exhibitions of levity. I am told by my brother George, now a minister in New Zealand, that on one occasion, long after I had left the paternal roof, the class in the Sunday School to which my younger brothers were attached, and which was taught by my mother, had been particularly restless and ill-behaved. She had been making an earnest appeal to the boys to concern themselves more earnestly and diligently about the things of religion. In her fervour, becoming quite oblivious of the mood the boys were manifesting openly, she wound up by passionately exclaiming: 'Eh, boys! I wad do anything to save yer souls.' My younger brother Henry, commonly called 'Hen,'—a wicked young wag in his way, but mother's pet—looked up with a comical twinkle in his eye, but with an assump-

tion of lamb-like innocence, and asked, 'Wad you clim' a tree, ma?' Full of earnest feeling, the dear old lady instantly replied, ''Deed wad I, laddie—I wad even clim' a tree!' and then seeing the boys laugh, she gave 'Hen' a smart slap on the cheek, saying: 'Hoots, ye rascal,' but immediately perceiving the humour of the situation, her nose assumed a merry wrinkle, and she heartily joined in the laugh against herself.

As an instance of her keen sense of the duty and obligation to 'give of her substance as God had prospered her,' I may mention an episode which occurred after my father's death. It exemplifies, too, the plain-spokenness and literal matter-of-fact way the older generation had of looking at sacred things, and speaking of them. She had been on a visit to relations in Edinburgh, and had gone to worship in the Free New North Church, where a favourite old friend of her beloved husband's ministered (the Rev. Dr. Charles Brown). She, with her usual keen observation, had seen a gorgeously-attired, fashionable, dowager-looking dame drop a penny in the plate at the door, while she herself, a poor, humble widow, not over-blessed with gear, had, from a sense of duty, given her shilling. She had evidently resented the niggardly meanness of the richly-attired dame, and had been bottling up her indignation during the service. As she came out, however, she gave vent to her feelings by exclaiming to my brother George, who accompanied her:

''Deed no, laddie, I wadna be sae mean. I wadna treat the Lord sae ill. If ye wear silk ye suld gie siller, an' nae less,' and then she explained the cause of her outburst.

Comparing the preaching of 'her ain guidman, the minister,' with that of another who was no *persona grata* with my mother, she said on one occasion to George:

'Ah, laddie! yer father gied's guid pasture—plenty o' clover in't; nae bare pykin like this puir craetur.'

I could not give anything more characteristic of the peculiar bent of her mind than the last words she said to myself when I was leaving for New Zealand. Her heart, I knew, was very full. I had been a wild, harum-scarum young student, perhaps not very vicious, but headstrong, rackety, too fond of pleasure, and full of prankish tricks. The dear old lady could not trust herself to come all the way to the station to see me off by the train. She was full of anxiety concerning my future, both for my soul and body. She knew if it was well with me spiritually it could not fail to be well with my prospects for this life in the highest sense; and yet with the anxious concern for my soul's health there mingled that peculiarly Scottish complexity of feeling that gave all its proper value to a fair outward appearance as an index to character, and a means of creating a good impression so as to get on in the world. Perhaps I had not been careful enough of money and clothes, seeing how hard it had been for the self-denying old couple to provide them. At any rate, it was in no spirit of reproach, but in genuine, unaffected, loving concern, that, stopping at the top of Dundas Street, under the shade of an overarching yew tree, placing her thin, worn hands on my broad young shoulders, and kissing me—the last kiss for many weary years—she said: 'Weel, Jamie, fear God, an' tak' care o' yer claes, an' there's nae fear but ye'll get on.'

Ah me! I have often thought since of the deep pathos in those homely, simple words. I have thought of the worn fingers and weary eyes engaged far into the night many and many a time when all the restless children had been hushed in sleep, busily stitching at the sadly-torn 'claes' which were so hard to get, and so little valued when got by the careless, thoughtless 'laddies.' Ah! many a prayer went up, as the midnight mending went on, that the boys might grow up to be God-fearing men; and it is some satisfaction to think that the gallant, brave old mother's last days were cheered by the evidences of her lads' well-doing, and that she knew that, so far at least as this world is concerned, her prayers on their behalf had been answered.

CHAPTER XV

A Hard-worked Minister—Vigorous of Mind and Body—Details of his Life and Character—Notes by my Brother George—The Manse Garden—Methodical Habits—Love of Children—Care for the Servants—Domestic Daily Routine—Fondness for a Joke—Some of his Stories—A Thievish Urchin—The Imperturbable Trespasser—Pat's Witty Answer—Habits in the Pulpit—His Favourites in History—Gentleness and Sweetness of Disposition—Private Devotion—Anecdotes of Dr. Cruden—Summary of the Old Minister's Character.

To give some idea of the industry and downright hard work expected from a minister in those stirring times after the Disruption, and as an evidence of my dear father's vigour of body and mind, I might instance that on one occasion he preached both forenoon and afternoon in Free St. John's Church, Montrose, then drove out to Edzell, some twelve miles away, and preached in his own church at six o'clock in the evening of the same day.

On another occasion he happened to be breakfasting at Woodmyre, a pleasant residence some miles from our village, in the neighbouring county of Kincardine. While at breakfast he received an urgent appeal from his cherished friend, Dr. Foote of Brechin, whose child

had died that morning, asking my father to go to Menmuir and officiate there in place of the reverend Doctor, who, owing to his sad and sudden bereavement, did not himself feel able to go.

It happened to be the Fast-Day in Menmuir, a secluded, hilly parish lying away in a corner of the Grampians, some eight or ten miles from our home. My father started off at once in great haste. He reached the manse and selected two sermons, and putting these in his pocket, he started to walk the long distance, over bad roads, and reached Menmuir Church only some twenty-five minutes after the usual hour for divine service. The congregation were just beginning to disperse when his figure hove in sight, but he managed to conduct the services with great acceptance.

On another Fast-Day in Brechin my father was again the recipient of a hasty summons from Dr. Foote to come in and officiate, as the minister who had been expected had been somehow unavoidably detained. My father was sowing oats on his land when the summons came, but with his usual good nature and promptitude he at once responded to the call of friendship and duty, and took two services in Brechin, sowing 'the good seed of the word' in place of the 'bare grain.' Dr. Foote seems to have had an unbounded faith in his readiness to oblige, for my brother George writes me that he *often*, without previous announcement, would send for my father to preach during the afternoon in Brechin, sending a gig to intercept him at the church door, not allowing him time even for dinner; and he would have to be back for his own service in his own church at six o'clock in the evening.

Many a time he has preached in the forenoon at Edzell, afternoon at Lethnot, and again in the evening at Edzell, walking all the way both to and from the distant Lethnot church.

He was very diligent in visiting his flock and in catechising the children, but always in such a kindly way that his visits were looked forward to with eager delight by both old and young. He did all the work of his scattered parish on foot, and *walked* to Brechin or Montrose to the stated meetings of presbytery. He was Clerk to the Synod of Angus and Mearns, and also to the Presbytery of Brechin, and was well versed in ecclesiastical law and procedure.

My brother George, who saw more of him in his later years than any of the rest, has sent me a few notes which perhaps give a better *résumé* of the salient points of the old minister's character than anything I could give, and I therefore present these just as I received them. He says:

'I am just jotting down my recollections at random, and can only give you the bare statements without elaboration. Papa had a keen sense of humour, a strong sense of duty, loyalty to his convictions, an utter disregard for consequences if convinced that his proposed course of action was *right*, great tenderness of heart, and sympathy with and for poor people and any one in trouble. He used hospitality without grudging, was as liberal as he could possibly be with his ofttimes straitened means, denied himself continuously for the sake of his children, and ever sought to make the manse one of the happiest homes in the world. He was fond of all sorts of manly pastimes, and was

a keen fisherman. He was fond of music and singing—indeed, was no mean performer on the violin, and dearly loved a good story or a good joke.

'He was in fact a healthy, breezy Scotchman, full of sanctified common sense, and sure to do good to those in his company. He hated smoking, drinking, and dancing, had a vigorous contempt for bazaars and church fairs, and any newfangled way of raising money for church or religious purposes. His utterances on such a subject were uncompromisingly honest and plain spoken: "There's the box or plate at the church door," he would say; "drop your offering in *like a man*, and don't expect two shillings' worth of amusement for one shilling's worth of contribution."

'He was somewhat careless in his dress, or rather it is truer to say he went somewhat shabbily dressed himself in order to provide clothes for his children. When sometimes twitted by friends in this regard, or if the conversation happened to turn on dress, I have heard him give utterance to the following original and homely sentiment:

'"Better have a hole in my coat than a hole in my conscience."

'He was, in addition to his knowledge of practical farming, a capital and expert gardener. He was a capable landscape gardener, and had a good knowledge of architecture and surveying, having given attention to these in his schoolmaster days. He was also a first-rate ploughman and a capital hand at all sorts of out-of-doors work. The beautiful manse garden, with its wealth of floral treasures, trim, well-stocked beds, and bountiful supply of all sorts of fruit trees

and bushes suitable to the soil and climate, was planned and laid out by himself. So, too, was the commodious and handsome manse itself, with all the outhouses and appurtenances. He was architect and clerk of works in one. He was fond of experimental gardening, and did a deal of grafting with his own hands. His sense of order was very pronounced. Every spring he sowed from forty to sixty varieties of annuals. The little packet which had contained the seed was then inserted in a slit stick and placed at the foot of the seed-bed, and he delighted to teach his boys the names and characteristics of each. In fact he was always encouraging us to ask questions. When we asked, "What's this, papa?" he would pull up the stick and say, "That's Nemophila," or "Saponaria," or "Acroclinum," and so on; and we delighted then to roll out these lang-nebbit words to our schoolmates, much to their wonderment and envy.

'Every morning after breakfast he went up to John Carr's village store, just for five minutes or so, to say "good morning" to John, or bring down what little groceries might be wanted for the day. He would look in at the door of the smiddy in passing, with a cheery salute for the smith and his men, and a pleasant word and smile for every one he met. He rarely passed a child without a pat on the head; and he invariably carried a "paper-pockie" of acid drops, pan drops, or other sweetmeats, from which he would gingerly and with much affected mystery and solemnity extract *one* and bestow it on the delighted youngster, who probably appreciated the simple little gift quite as much as our coddled and spoilt juveniles of the

present era appreciate a gift of money, which would have kept my dear father in "sweeties" for a month.

'He had a good knowledge of medicine, and, like Dr. Robert Jeffray of Glasgow, could "gie either a pill or a prayer," as the case demanded. One of his favourite pleasures was to see a good fire in the grate. Indeed, in winter he kept the best fires I ever saw in any house, but he would allow no one to touch the fire-irons but himself.

'As I have said, he was most exact and methodical in his habits and in all his ways. He taught us all to neatly fold our clothes and place them exactly in the same place each night on going to bed. We all had to take our turns in helping the servants to fold the table-cloth, set the table, collect dishes, and do other little domestic duties; and he exacted from us a cheerful and ready obedience to every demand for help from any of the servants. He himself set the example, and was simply loved by them for his truly gentle and godly consideration. In this and other respects he was a truly chivalrous, courteous, Christian gentleman.

'At seven every morning he rose. At eight, no matter who was ready or the reverse, his clear voice rang out from the foot of the stair with the summons, "Come down to worship." It mattered not if he was the only one ready; he read a portion of a psalm, raised the tune, and proceeded with the regular routine. After prayers, breakfast immediately succeeded. Dinner at one. Tea at four. Prayers again at half-past seven. Possibly some light supper at eight, and bed, with all lights out, punctually at ten. From year's end to year's end there was scarcely ever

a variation of five minutes from these hours. If any one were perhaps asked to tea, and should they unfortunately fail in punctuality, he would manifest impatience and become quite fidgety. He might give five minutes grace to the laggard, but never more. He would then seat himself, and at once recovering his equanimity and good temper would jocularly remark, "Come awa', guidwife, we'll jist tak' oor tea, and syne wait."

'He was fond of a very mild and innocent practical joke, such as putting his hot teaspoon on the back of one's hand, and he relished the innocent bamboozlement of children, when he would propound such queries as, "Weel, min, will ye hae butter on the yae side o' yer piece, an' jeelie on the tither?" When out driving with him once, I remember he pulled up suddenly and said, "Weel, min, whether will ye turn or gae back?" . . . . then laughing jocosely at his bairn's bewilderment, he would drive on again, enlivening the way with merry quip, and pointing out the different birds, trees, and flowers, telling us their names, and drawing our attention to every point of interest along the road.

'He took an intense delight in stimulating our powers of observation; and we, one and all, looked forward to an outing with papa as one of the crowning treats of life.

'I am sorry I do not remember more of his stories, of which he had a never-ending store. I have heard him talk of an old pedlar, evidently an odd character, who used to come about the manse at Lochlee. On one occasion this oddity was trying to sell a book, and

papa teased him and angered him, by pretending that the book was no good, as it was incomplete. The mannie snatched it from his hand in high dudgeon, turned over the pages till he came to the end, then holding it up before the audience, triumphantly exclaimed: "Sorra pyke out yer een, ye cuif. D'ye no see 'Feenis' at the boddom o't?"'

'He used to recall with great amusement an episode which occurred on one occasion when he was travelling by rail to Edinburgh. An old wifie, very inebriated, forced herself into the carriage where he was seated; and seeing his white neckcloth sang in a most aggressive manner a song aimed at the cloth, in which this chorus occurred. My father used to give a most whimsical imitation of the old wife's voice and manner.

> "They hangit the meenister,
> They drooned the precentor,
> An' they drank the bell,
> In the bonnie wee pairish abune Dunkel'. . . ."'

Still continuing his notes, George, speaking of myself, says, 'He always spoke of you as Jamie, and spoke a great deal about you. He often told with great glee an exploit of yours when you were quite a youngster. It seems all you boys had been specially forbidden to touch the apples on a certain tree which papa was anxious about, as he had been making some experiments in grafting upon it. His exact command had been that "none of you were to lay a finger upon these particular apples." "But Jamie," he would say, "fulfilled the letter of the law and satisfied conscience (and his appetite for apples) by lying down under-

neath the tree and munching the fruit, leaving the gnawed heart hanging by the stalk to be spied out by the worthy horticulturist on his next perambulation."

'He had a strong objection to the game laws, to fishing restrictions, to closing up of policies and pleasure-resorts, and to the exclusion from estates generally of peaceable and well-behaved visitors. This reminds me that when David came home from Australia he took the whole tribe of us one day up to the Ganochy to visit "Adam's Cave," the "Loup's Brig," and other points of interest in the now jealously guarded demesne, which had, however, from time immemorial been free to the public. We were going up the old footpath behind the fine modern shooting-lodge which had been recently erected by Lord Panmure, when Sandie Dorrit, the gardener, who had formerly been beadle in my father's church, but who had gone back to "the flesh-pots of Erastianism," as my mother would have said, came out, and said very majestically to David:

'"There's no ro'd this w'y, Maister Inglis!"

'"Oh," says Davie, quite unabashed, "we're no lookin' for the road, Sandie," and on we went, picking the raspberries that bordered the path, much no doubt to Sandie's chagrin. When we came home and the old man heard the circumstances, he was hugely delighted, and warmly commended the returned gold-digger for his spirit.

'Another good story which I remember papa making use of in his address at the school-examination was this. There was a Mr. Robey, at one time farmer at Invereskandie, and one of papa's elders. He was a quiet

intelligent man, and spoke with a slight lisp. He afterwards went to Bradford, and was for many years correspondent there to the *North British Agriculturist*. Being on a visit to Ireland, and seeing a man digging potatoes in a field, he hailed him, and in his slow solemn, Scotch fashion he asked:

'"What kind of potatoes are thae, my man?"

'"Raw potatoes, yer honour," answered Pat as quick as lightning.

'When beginning his sermon in the pulpit he always pulled his large old watch out of his breeches fob, and looked at the time; and between saying "May the Lord bless the preaching of His Word. Amen!" and the beginning of his "prayer after the sermon," he invariably pulled out the watch again to see how long he had been in preaching. So far as I can recollect,' says George with professional complacency, 'this was the only bad habit he had in the pulpit.

'He was fond of history, and intensely patriotic. He had unbounded veneration for Knox and Andrew Melville, for Alexander Henderson, and for all the goodly roll of "Scots Worthies," both in ecclesiastical and civil history, who had "nobly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints," and for liberty; and he inspired me at least,' says George, 'with a love for the same men, and deep admiration for their principles. He would often speak enthusiastically of Chalmers, Hugh Miller, Dr. Welsh, and many others who were the heroes of "The Ten Years' Conflict." He was intensely loyal to his denomination, and a thoroughgoing Protestant. In a word, he was a man of magnificent religious principle; and sometimes in his semi-jocular

way, yet with a deep intensity of feeling underlying the humorous words, he would say "that he would have burned with a glorious crackle at the martyr's stake, if his lot had fallen in the old persecuting times."

'He kept numerous hives of bees in the garden, and was very expert in their management; but he would not allow dogs, cats, or fowls to be kept about the place. They offended his sense of orderliness and love of tidiness; but his gentle, loving nature used to be characteristically manifested in the rigorous winter days, when he would every morning put out crumbs for the wee birdies, who used to flock round him as if knowing he was a friend.

'Prompt obedience was always insisted on, and he very rarely had to speak twice to any of us. Still, he ruled by love and not by fear. If any of us were inclined to perhaps *leisurely* obey mother's commands, there came an unmistakable, "What did your mother say, sir?" from papa, and the book was shut, or the game stopped, and prompt obedience at once rendered.

'We said our prayers at his knee in the study one by one at night invariably, and occasionally in the morning. At night, after praying, he kissed us affectionately. The kiss was always accompanied by a formula pronounced with tender good-humour, and accompanied by a kindly gleam from the loving, deep gray eyes. The words were "Guid-nicht, Breeklums." It is an evidence of the settled orderliness of his mind that he never varied this salutation and benediction in one. Indeed, the simple, homely phrase has often come back to us in after life, with all the clinging memories

of an earnest blessing. If any of us were on the sick-list his solicitude was most touching. He would sit by the sick-bed, read to us, tell us stories, and invent all sorts of loving little resources to keep us cheerful and assist our recovery.

'Sunday was observed as "a high day." It "was the family festival of the week." On Saturday mother cooked the best dinner that could be procured. There was sure to be something extra for the Sunday dinner. There was only the soup or broth and potatoes to be warmed, and that could be done without keeping any one at home from public worship. We always had dessert on Sunday, and after dessert papa went to his study and brought us each an apple, or some comfits, "tablet sconnies," or "Farfar Rock," or perhaps some comfit or preserved ginger, or other delicacy, which had been sent from India or China by one or other of the scattered members of the family. We were allowed to walk decorously in the garden, but not to trail about outside the gates.

'Papa spent a great deal of his time in private devotion. After dressing, he went to the study and engaged in private prayer. Then, after breakfast, he read his Bible for an hour. After dinner he again read his Bible for nearly an hour; and after "worship" in the evening, he retired to his bedroom and read and prayed till about half-past nine, when he would again come downstairs for a little. During the evening mother poured boiling water over a rusk—sometimes two rusks—in a bowl, sweetened it, and on rare occasions poured a tablespoonful of old brandy over it, and one of us took it up to him. That was all the supper he ever

took. Even when any of you elder boys came home for your holidays, or about New Year time, when the manse was full of rollicking young people, and all sorts of toothsome delicacies were in abundance (which was more frequently the case in later years), papa made very little change in his habits. He might come downstairs a little sooner, but he did not sit at table, but in his easy chair at the fireside, making quaint and humorous remarks from time to time. At the time I speak of he was more or less of an invalid and had to be careful.

'He seldom wore a greatcoat or gloves, and looked with considerable contempt on an umbrella as an effeminate encumbrance. Like Professor Blackie, he would have said, "Leave your umbrellas to the hens and the ladies. I prefer to look Jove in the face, be he fair or foul."

'I remember two of his stories of Dr. Cruden of Nigg. The doctor, an unusually godly man, had occasion to reprove a fisherman for telling an untruth, and incautiously remarked that he himself had never wilfully told a lie in his life.

'"Ay, but ye did lee," said the fisherman, "an' that in the vera poopit!"

'"Me, John?" said the astonished minister. "Ye must be greatly mistaken."

'"Mistaken here, or mistaken there, sir,—you said that Nichol Davidson was a ruler amo' the Jews, an' I ken brawly he's nivver been mair nor five-an'-therty mile frae the Cove o' Nigg in his life."

'The poor man had mixed up Nicodemus with some local scion of the clan Davidson.

'Reproving a fisherman for ill-treating his wife, on

another occasion, the good doctor closed his exhortation by reminding him that "the wife was the weaker vessel." "Ay, weel than," said the wrathful husband, "she should cairry the laicher (lower) sail."'

But here I must pause. I have elsewhere in this book recorded some of the many humorous stories of which my father had such a goodly store. He was a perfect mine of wealth for the collector of quaint phrases and 'reminiscences of Scottish character.' His *répertoire* of clerical stories was unsurpassed for the variety and humour of the illustrations of ministerial habits of thought and tricks of style.

These unstudied notes of my brother, however, disclose the character of the man. They portray, in their simple, affectionate fashion, the fine 'honest man, *the* minister,' as his people loved to call him. He was a whole-souled, pure-hearted, noble-natured gentleman. He was a loyal, lion-hearted friend, fearless and independent in his advocacy of any just cause; an open, frank, but unsparing antagonist to any mean, contemptible, or paltering policy. He had a womanly tenderness to all in sorrow or distress. His deep and pure affection, and the almost childlike innocence of his disposition, endeared him especially to young people; and I doubt if in all the Mearns there was a minister more in request to celebrate marriages, conduct school-examinations, and other similar functions. His genial humour, kindly wit, and transparent sincerity, always made his presence welcome, and his addresses were models of kindly, shrewd, Christian counsel, and redolent with the perfume of a pure life and a generous unselfishness.

Nobly, indeed, did he try to live up to his own high ideal. Little wonder is it that we treasure his memory with loving reverence. And we can truly say that his own simple, earnest, yet noble ambition was fully realised. With a pride which is wholly free from cant or affectation, or any base alloy, we can say boldly, yet reverently, and in the fullest and highest sense, that we are indeed 'the children of AN HONEST MAN.'

CHAPTER XVI

'Oor Ain Laddies'—What to do with the Boys—David the Boat-builder—An Eventful Career—Alexander the Merchant—An Early Start—Long Hours and Hard Work—A Swarm from the Parent Hive—The Merchant's Distinguished Career: his Character—Robert the Financier—Connection with the Volunteer Movement—My own Career—The Supposed 'Black Sheep'—Tom the Planter: a Cannie, Couthie Bachelor—John the Student: his Brilliant Promise and Early Lamented Death—Willie the Banker: his Early Death—George the Minister—Henry the 'Shargar o' the Klekin'—A Typical Family—Colonising Tendencies of the Race—The Old Folks' Letters—Unique Circular Notes—Strange Use for a Tract.

WHAT shall we do with our boys?' was no doubt as anxious a problem to solve with my father and mother as it is now in many a manse and humble home. With the strong good sense which distinguished him, however, my father determined just to 'cut his coat according to his cloth.' With the miserably inadequate salary of a Free Church country minister of the time, it was obviously impossible that he could put his boys to college; and so in family conclave it was resolved to give the lads a trade, at all events, which might stand them in good stead in after life.

Accordingly, my eldest brother David was apprenticed to a boatbuilder in the neighbouring town of Montrose, and one of my earliest boyish recollections is the delight we experienced in lying among the shavings in the workshop, which was near the suspension bridge, and fishing through a knot-hole in the pine flooring for 'podlies' in the water beneath. The workshop was erected on piles, and overhung part of the harbour, and the lapping water beneath kept rhythm with the swish of saw and plane overhead.

The story of how the worthy minister and his wife toiled and struggled, sacrificed, worked, and prayed, to give their lads an honest start in the world, is to me, looking back now over the vanished years, full of pathos and deep interest. I think it may be taken as fairly typical of the gallant and heroic fight with fortune which was waged in many a middle-class home in Scotland at that time. As such it has its value, and while I must not weary the patience of my readers by amplifying details too much, I think I may be pardoned if I very briefly sketch in broad outline the respective careers of my large bevy of brothers.

David, the eldest, had vicissitudes of fortune enough to fill a three-volume novel. After learning his trade he went to sea as ship's carpenter; was one of the first 'to take up a claim' on the breaking out of the famous gold discoveries in Australia at Ballarat and Bendigo. His adventures on 'the diggings' were in themselves a romance. At one time he possessed some £7000. This he entrusted to the commander of his ship, Captain Brown, who had been working as a mate with him on the gold-fields, who had also amassed a decent

sum, and was about to return home with it. Poor Brown, there is every reason to believe, must have 'fallen among thieves,' and met a fate all too common in those lawless times. At any rate, he was never afterwards heard of, and my brother's hardly-earned hoard disappeared with him. Next David took to various pursuits, from contracting to butchering; worked at his trade in Sydney in the fifties; went to China, where he did gallant service as a volunteer at the taking of the Winter Palace at Pekin; finally, he settled down in Montrose with an honest partner, where he carried on the business of a coachbuilder; married, reared a family of boys and girls who are all now doing well in the world, and some years ago died, honoured, beloved, and esteemed for his genuine Christian character by all who knew him.

The next in rotation was Alexander, a loyal, loving soul, possessed of more than ordinary perseverance and force of character; and his story, too, would be worth the telling, had I time and space at my disposal.

At the early age of thirteen he was taken from the village school and sent up to Edinburgh, to the drudgery and long hours of a fashionable drapery establishment, to learn the mysteries of 'the soft-goods' trade. The poor boy had to be at the shop long before eight on the cold, dark, winter mornings to sweep out the premises, dust the counters, and do the usual 'hard graft,' which, however necessary and honourable, must yet have been, before the era of eight-hours movements, trades-unions, and all the social ameliorations of the present day, almost too much for the tender frame of a boy of thirteen. It was rarely indeed that he saw the

inside of the bedclothes before twelve at night; but he must have been plucky, persevering, and hardy, because he won the good-will and esteem of his employers, and the hearty liking of all his fellow-employees. After his long, hard apprenticeship he took a leading position in the counting-house, and the arduous training he had passed through stood him in good stead in after years.

His was indeed a noble character. One of the first uses he made of his increased emoluments was to help his struggling parents; and the welcome additions to the common purse sent by him and my brother David enabled our parents to give the rest of the boys better educational advantages. After many anxious prayerful plannings and schemings, it was decided that Robert and myself should be sent up to Edinburgh under the charge of our only sister, to attend some of the schools there.

A house was accordingly taken in the top flat of one of the common-stair tenements for which Scottish towns are famous. Our street led down directly to the Queen's Park. The home was plainly furnished; and here for some years Alick and Jeannie played the part of a vicarious father and mother to Robert and myself, and eventually Tom and John, the next two on the long list, were added to this swarm from the parent hive.

Dear me! how memories throng upon me as I write. A goodly volume could be written of my student life in Edinburgh, but I must reserve that, as Rudyard Kipling might say, for 'another story.'

Suffice it to say that Alick became chief bookkeeper in the Free Church Offices, was offered a post of great

confidence in a leading Calcutta firm, which he accepted, and went to India. Here his career was one of rapid advancement, of great public usefulness and full of honour. He soon became one of the leading and most trusted merchants in Calcutta; was called to the Council of the Viceroy as representative of the commercial interests; was elected to the honourable position of President of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce; and after a long career of distinguished activity in every useful and beneficent direction, he retired with a handsome competence to enjoy the delights of home with his sweet wife and dear children; but alas! he did not live long to enjoy these gracious gifts. After a brief and painful illness he 'fell asleep' some years ago, mourned by many devoted friends, both in high and humble station, in nearly every part of Her Majesty's dominions. There never breathed a kindlier man. He was almost entirely self-educated, but he was as pure-minded, humble, and lovable a Christian gentleman as ever broke bread.

To his generosity I owe most of my own education, and at a critical time in my life it was to his loving care and counsel that I owe, under the good providence of God, whatever of worldly success has crowned my own rather eventful career.

My brother Robert still lives, thank God. He is a rich and honoured man, and he has been a true-hearted, loving son and brother all his days. May they be 'long in the land.' He is well known on the London Stock Exchange, and has taken a life-long interest in the great volunteer movement in

England. He recently retired with the honorary rank of Lieutenant-Colonel; and one of the London dailies in noting the fact comments as follows on 10th April 1891—

'This resignation deprives the volunteer service of a very able officer, who has always taken very great interest in its welfare, and has displayed much activity and energy in supporting the movement. We believe that Major Inglis now resigns because he is of opinion that it will be to the interest of the service if he makes room for younger and more active men. We may add that the gallant officer served in the Queen's Edinburgh Rifle Brigade from 1860 to 1866; and in the London Irish Rifles (Hon. Colonel H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, K.P., etc. etc.) from 1867 until now. We have no doubt the regiment will much regret the severance of his connection with it.'

As to myself little need be said. I have been repeatedly urged to tell the story of my life which has been full of adventure and change. Perhaps I may some day. It has been one long record of mercies and kindnesses; and though at one time, I believe, sundry shortsighted critics predicted that I would come to no good, and put me down as 'the minister's black sheep,' there were not wanting kindly hearts who responded with the more cheering prophecy that I would yield 'as good a clip' as any of them in the long-run. 'So mote it be.'

Thomas Chalmers, the next to myself, is the only bachelor of the family. He learned the trade of a practical engineer. Graduating in the village blacksmith's shop, then in a local millwright's, he after-

wards served a long apprenticeship in St. Margaret's Locomotive Works, near Edinburgh; then worked for a time at marine engineering at Plymouth, and took charge as engineer of an expedition despatched to St. Vigo Bay, to try to recover some sunken Spanish treasure galleons. This not resulting in a success he went out to India, where he was for many years a successful tea-planter; and he has now retired to enjoy a comfortable leisure in his native village, where he leads the life of a cannie country gentleman, and dispenses hospitality in the very house in which he was born, with all the kindliness and heartiness for which his father and grandfather before him were famed.

John was next on the list. In some respects he was perhaps the best equipped, intellectually, of the whole family. He was set apart by the old couple for the ministry. He passed through his university course with distinction; took the degree of Master of Arts; received his theological training in the Free Church College, and while yet very young was appointed to the charge of the Scottish Orphanage in Bombay as Principal. After a short time he entered the service of the Government of India, and was appointed Inspector for the important educational district of Roy Bareilly. Here, during the deadly cholera season of 1878, my gallant young brother fell a victim to that terrible scourge, and died nobly doing his duty. His young wife — a niece of the celebrated George Gilfillan — and her infant daughter had been sent away up to the hill station of Nynee Tal, while poor Jack remained at his post in Fyzabad.

The station doctor was weary and worn with incessant service, and Jack one evening insisted on the doctor resting while he took his rounds for him through the bazaars. To this his medical friend would not agree; but they went out together to minister to the poor stricken people in the crowded, tainted city. Possibly poor Jack was sickening for the disease even then. Very likely the long hot season had predisposed him to catch the contagion. He was never one to spare himself, and having been a powerful athlete in his student days, he may have imagined himself stronger than he really was. At all events he fell a victim to the dreaded scourge, and in a few hours a fresh mound in the English cemetery alone marked the spot of his final earthly rest. Such tragedies are common in India. Ah me! how well I remember the tall, manly, athletic form; the kindly brown eye and ready smile; the strong, nervous hand-grip, and the womanly tenderness and loving care, when I lay a helpless cripple in the cosy, home-like bungalow which owned Jack as master. A sweet-faced, low-voiced widow, with a gentle, wistful-eyed daughter, just budding into winsome womanhood, also remember dear Jack, and look forward to the meeting by and by.

Willie, the next, lies in a lonely grave by the great Australian inland river. He had taken an honourable position on the London Stock Exchange, but his health breaking down, he came out to Australia. After entering the service of one of the leading banks there, he accepted the position of branch manager in the far back, pastoral, riverside town of Wilcannis. Here he was joined by his goodhearted,

loyal, loving wife and her four children. The first year of their stay there, however, proved too much for poor Willie's enfeebled frame. The temperature is frequently over 100° in the shade, and my poor brother fell a victim to sunstroke.

Next on the list is George. He has manifested the hereditary bent, and is now a minister of the New Zealand Presbyterian Church. After passing through a creditable collegiate course in Edinburgh, he studied for two years under the venerable Principal Hodge and Dr. M'Cosh at Princeton College, U.S., travelled to Australia through India, and is now the honoured and beloved pastor of a large farming district in Otago. A clever wife and two fine boys help to make his snug manse bright and cheerful; and he too is a living refutation of the stupid libel that 'ministers' sons always turn out badly.'

My youngest brother Henry is married and doing well in London; and so far the manse boys, 'by the good hand of their father's God upon them,' have proved themselves fair average specimens of the myriad sons of the manse, who have gone out into the world from many a mossy howe, to sustain the good repute of their fathers, and uphold the fair fame of dear auld mither Scotland.

I take the foregoing necessarily brief review to be typical of the colonising tendencies of our race. Here is a family of boys, all of whom left the quiet home circle and made their way in the world. After I had left home to go to Edinburgh, we generally tried to be all at home every Christmas, at least as many as could gather together, but after I was

fourteen years of age, I do not remember that the whole family were ever all assembled together at one time under the same roof. It was the same with my cousins. We got scattered abroad to the very ends of the earth, and I have met at various times near blood relations in New Zealand, Australia, India, the Straits Settlements, in Africa, and elsewhere; while in Brazil, Canada, Cape Colony, China, America, and the Islands of the Pacific there are representatives of 'oor vera ain folk,' all playing a creditable part in the conduct of affairs, and keeping up the good name and credit of the clan.

We were, in sooth, a happy and united family though often separated by distance and pursuing widely-different avocations. So long as the good old father and mother lived, their letters were a common bond of union. It was a beautiful trait in their character this letter-writing. The old folks looked on it as a duty, and it was performed with religious fidelity. Every fortnight, until latterly, when the weariness of age crept over the nimble brain and fingers, my dear mother managed to write to all her surviving boys. My father's letters too were frequent, and oh how welcome! Both were splendidly gifted in the epistolary art. We heard all about each other in these frequent epistles, and there ever breathed through them such a kindly 'hame owre' spirit that they were indeed sacramental, and cast a spell of loyal affection to the dear writers and to each other of the scattered family, which withstood all the usual effects of absence and distance, divided aims, and widely-differing pursuits.

At one time there were four of us in India together, and on the suggestion of my brother Jack we wrote a joint letter as a sort of New Year's card, which we forwarded to the others of the family, and this gave such pleasure to the old folks that it became a yearly custom. Thinking the custom a good one, and that it may prove a little interesting, I give here two specimens *verb. et lit.* of this somewhat unique correspondence.

I hope that the reader may make some allowances as he runs his eye through what was certainly never intended for publication of this sort; my only excuse for now reprinting these old circular letters is the belief that others may perhaps be fired to follow our example; and if the pleasure given to some loved ones be even measurably near to what our random letters gave, I will not have given the hint for naught.

The first is as follows:—

WRITE YOUR NAME AND PASS IT ON TO THE CHIEF O' THE CLAN.

1*st January* 1874.

Faizabad, Oudh.

My dear Jim, Tom, Alick, Jessie, Robbie, Ethel, Baby, Bob, Ellen, Will, Hen, George, Davie, Annie—a' yer bairns, for I dinna ken their names—Andrew, Jeanie, Nelly, Bob, Tatie Tam, Curly Pow—an' a' the rest, for I forgot them too—Lizzie, Papa an' Mamma—the twa Patriarchs— a very Happy New Year to you all, an' mony o' them.

Always your very affectionate brither, uncle, half-uncle, an' son, Jack.

In Camp, Radhanugger, Hoolas,
Bhaugulpore.

Ditto, ditto, also, likewise, and in repetition,—Lang may ye lauch at the doctor, an' hae mair o' the warl' and the flesh than the deevil, an' hae mony another fit o' indigestion owre Xmas pudden an' New Year's cake.

Jim.

Brechin Castle Shanty,
Tukdah, Darjeeling.

My dearly beloved parents, brethren, sistern, and relations,—I wish you all the same as Jack and Jim. May you all have more of this world's gear than I have at present, and long may you live to enjoy it. Success to the bachelors: may they soon become scarce, and yet at the same time increase, and never forget the old folks.—Your loving relative,

Tom Chalmers.

---

15 Elysium Row, Calcutta.

All of us here, both big and little, wish the dear old folks at Edzell, and all our other relatives in Scotland, England, India, or elsewhere, very many happy returns of the New Year, and every other good wish.

A. B. Inglis.
Jessie Inglis.
Robbie A. Inglis.
Ethel M. Inglis.
Hugh M. Inglis X his mark.

South Penge Park,
Surrey, England.

'Ta same owre here, but she snaws.'

R. W. Inglis.
Ellen Inglis.

Hairywirm Dookit,
Bayswater, London.

Like the auld wife's parrot, we 'dinna speak muckle, but we're deevils to think,' and are aye thinkin' aboot ye a'.

W. B. Inglis.
H. Inglis.

Edinburgh University.

Here's health, strength, long life, and happiness to ye a'.

Geo. B. Inglis.

---

17 Armit's Buildings,
Montrose.

In continuation of the foregoing sentiments, we heartily join.

David Inglis.
Anne Inglis.
Maggie Jane Inglis.
Alexander Brand Inglis.
Robert Inglis.

Brechin, 10th February 1874.

This has travelled far,
And now is near its hame ;
To all the good express'd
We add our hand and name.

Andrew Simpson.
Jane Simpson.
Nelly Simpson.
Robert Inglis Simpson.
Catherine Jane Simpson.
Rose Adelaide Simpson.
Andrew Melville Simpson.
Lizzie Simpson.

The next was written a full decade after the foregoing, and the observant reader will see that in the interim death had been busy, and that our hitherto happy and united family was beginning to feel the common fate of all merely earthly associations and institutions.

1st January 1884,
Warepa, Otago, N.Z.

My dear Mamma, and all the Members of the Family, big and little,—

We wish you much happiness throughout the coming year. We trust that Grannie will be long spared to us yet, and aye hae a competent portion o' the guid things o' this life, and be able to gie a shillin' or twa to puir folk.

May prosperity attend oor clan, and may we a' walk in the footsteps of our dear father, gone to his reward.

Geo. B. Inglis.
Milly P. Inglis.

Amid all the inevitable changes of life, let our loving sympathy for each other know no change. We owe much to the dear ones that are gone: we can best pay it by showing love to those that are still with us. Fair fa' ye a'.

Craigo, Redmyre,
Sydney, N.S.W., 20-2-84.

Jas. Inglis.
Mary Inglis.

So fa' ye, Tomas. The foregoing foreigners seem to be rather sentimental, and as there is not much fun in me just now, I heartily endorse the aforesaid sentimental sentiments, and hope Mamma will be long spared to receive a paper like this, with the signatures of all her sons, and perhaps one more daughter, as I hope I am not to remain the only 'Bloomin' Bachelor.'

Tukdah, Darjeeling,
India, 30th March 1884.

Thos. C. Inglis.

This Family Letter for Mamma only reached London this week after a journey from New Zealand to Australia, thence to India, and then home. Our household here all unite very heartily in wishing Mamma (she is Grannie to most of us) many happy returns of the New Year, and hope she may be long spared to her Children and Grandchildren, and that she may be able to come South and see the latest

additions to the number of the latter in the course of a few weeks.

Coombehurst,
Lunham Road,
Upper Norwood,
24th April 1884.

A. B. Inglis.
Jessie Anne Inglis.
R. A. Inglis.
Ethel Margaret Inglis.
Frances H. L. Inglis.
Charles Elliot Inglis.
Emily Gertrude Inglis.
Arthur Loveday Inglis.
Colin Stuart Inglis X his mark.

Craigendowie, Reigate, Surrey,
26th April 1884.

Here's t'ye, Grannie ! Lang may yer lum reek.

R. W. Inglis.
Ellen Inglis.

'Oakfield,' Selhurst Road,
South Norwood, S.E.,
28th April 1884.

All here entirely agree with the sentiments expressed by the elder members of the Clan, and hope that Dear Mamma and Grannie (two in one) will long be spared to be a blessing to all of us.

W. B. Inglis.
Mary Inglis.
Helen Margaret Inglis X
Robert Andrew Inglis X
William Andrew Inglis X
Mary Lilian Jane Inglis X
} Their marks.

5 Stotham Grove,
Green Lane, N.,
London, 29th April 1884.

We also join in hearty good wishes for dear Mamma's welfare, and hope that her proverbial *teuchness* may long stand her in good stead.

'When bendin' doon wi' auld gray hairs,
Beneath the load of years and cares,
May He who made thee still support thee,
And views beyond the grave comfort thee,
Our worthy family, far and near,
God bless them a' wi' grace and gear.'

Henry Inglis.
Amy Catherine Inglis.

---

28 Bridge Street,
Montrose,
2nd May 1884.

Dear Grannie—The branches are far spread, part o' the stem gone. May the half that remains long continue to thrive!

David Inglis.
Anne Inglis.
Maggie Jane Inglis.
A. B. Inglis.
Robert Inglis.
James Inglis.
Tom C. Inglis.
John K. Inglis X his mark.
Helen Ann Inglis X her mark.

Brechin, 6th May 1884.

Dear Grannie—George's paper has just come our length; we heartily join our good wishes to the rest, and may ye lang come rinnin' (for ye dinna walk) up the brae to read the paper, and say, 'Fat's dain' the day, lassie?'

A. Simpson.
Jane Inglis Simpson.
Robert Inglis Simpson.
Catherine Jane Simpson.
Rosie A. Simpson.
Andrew M. Simpson.

---

55 Southesk Street,
Brechin, 7th May 1884.

Long may Grannie reign, the head and centre of a prosperous, united, and happy family!

Marion W. Inglis.
Ruby C. Inglis.

My mother's letters were generally racy and humorous, though permeated through and through with the most intense piety, and full of earnest appeals to our religious feelings. Sometimes she would, in our opinion, devote just a little more space than we thought desirable to these exhortations and give too little local and family news. She was a great believer in the efficacy of tracts, and, with true Scottish economy, wishful always to take the full value of her postage stamp, she would enclose up to the full postal allowance leaflets and printed extracts, if her written epistle was

not up to the regulation weight. On one occasion she had given me rather scanty village news as I thought, and rather too many of 'Peter Drummond's leaflets for letters.' It so happened that my letter reached me out in camp, in my Indian home, and a poor man from one of the villages had come to me with a sick cow, for which he wanted me to act as doctor. I had made up a bolus for the cow, and for want of a better envelope, I took the coloured leaflet, which I explained to the gaping rustic was a powerful English charm, and would help the work of the medicine. Wrapping my bolus therefore in the thin pink paper on which the tract was printed, the drug was administered, paper and all, and I am glad to be able to chronicle that the cow speedily recovered from her ailment. I wrote a humorous account of this to my old mother, gently chiding her at the same time for giving me too much tract and too little news. The only response, however, was a bigger and thicker packet of tracts by a following mail, and round the parcel was a direction written in the well-known caligraphy of the dear old lady:

'Thae's for yersel', my man, an' no' for the coo!'

NOTE TO THOMAS CHALMERS INGLIS, p. 259.

Since these pages were written, my honest kind-hearted brother has passed away to the silent land. He never recovered from the effects of his early Indian pioneering experiences, and sank peacefully to rest, surrounded by loving friends, in October 1893, just as this book was preparing for press.

CHAPTER XVII

Declining Years—Increasing Infirmities—An Assistant and Successor appointed—The Last Sermon—Closing Scenes—His Strong Faith—Considerate to the Last—A Noble Dying Testimony—The End: 'Peace.'

SOME time after the elder boys had gone out into the world, the weight of increasing years and cares began to tell on the old minister. The stalwart frame began to bend more, the keen, kindly, gray eye grew somewhat dimmer. He began to suffer too from painful neuralgic affections. During the days of my boyhood he had gone round among his friends all over Scotland, and had raised funds enough to build a fine, commodious manse for his large and growing family. To this he added a spacious and beautiful garden, the care of which was one of his chief delights. He was a most enthusiastic gardener, and a practical and accomplished one withal. He took a keen interest in experiments with new and foreign seeds, and was an expert in most branches of this primal industry.

Finding his infirmities increasing, however, and being no longer able to look after the whole of his widely-scattered flock in distant glen and on lonely

upland, as he was wont to do, the people resolved to procure him an assistant and successor. This step was taken sorely against my father's desires, but as it was the determination of the people, he loyally acquiesced in the expression of their will. An assistant was accordingly appointed.

In 1875 I managed to get home for a short visit, but the season was a severe one, and the cold changeable climate proved too trying for my relaxed state of health. My dear father preached his last sermon the Sabbath after my arrival; and it was sad to see how much he had lost of his old fire and vigour. He still, however, retained his fine, kindly sense of humour, and was never at a loss for some quaint, humorous criticism on current events.

Some few years previously a horse had trod on his foot, severely crushing the great toe. This had been treated rather lightly, but there were constant recurrences of inflammation, and at length the toe had to be amputated. This course ought to have been taken much earlier, for even the amputation did not secure relief. Inflammatory action set in higher up the limb, and at length focused itself in the groin, where a malignant tumour gathered, and though an operation was performed, it did not materially relieve his sufferings.

My brother George was also at home at the time, and from his detailed account of the last sad days I condense the following narrative. As showing how strong the old man's sense of humour was, when George came home from Edinburgh on Christmas Day 1875, and saw the wasted form for the first time,

he was deeply affected, but trying to cheer up the sufferer he stammered out: 'You're no lookin' so ill as I expected to find you.' To which, with a wan, wintry smile, he managed to whisper: 'Ah, but I was aye a guid-lookin' chiel', ye ken.'

George proceeds—'He was not able to speak much nor yet to smile. He told me one day to have all the Assembly's blue books tied up and given to the Session Clerk, "so that he would have no need to come and ask for them."

'He told me to burn all his MS. sermons on the Psalms, as he said they were composed in a hurry at the beginning of his ministry, and during the "Ten Years' Conflict," and were not so well finished as he would have liked, but he had never found time to revise them. He said they contained numerous extracts from the writings of Matthew Henry and others.

'He specially wished to expend a small credit he had in the savings bank, in the purchase of a clock to be put in the church where all could see it, and specially named four of his old and tried hearers to take charge of the clock. To his lifelong friend and medical attendant, old Doctor Mackie of Brechin, he wished that, after his bill was paid in full, a present of Five Pounds might be made, saying: "I think there will be funds enough for that."'

I think that was a fine characteristic trait of his loyalty to old friends and the liberal generosity of his nature; for it must not be forgotten that five pounds represented to a poor country minister quite as much as a far larger sum would to a richer man.

'On the 12th of January he had a terrible fit of coughing, said "he was a great sufferer, and longed to get home," but "he must wait his appointed time," and then he murmured, "O Time — time — time!" Next day his much-attached friends, Mr. and Mrs. Nixon, came from Montrose, and a very affecting conversation was held. Mr. Nixon asked among other things if he regretted the sacrifices he had made for Christ's sake. A fine glow of enthusiasm lit up the wasted features, and with a burst of deep feeling, holding up his wasted hands, he replied: "Oh no, no, no!" Mr. Nixon then prayed very touchingly for him, Mrs. Nixon tenderly kissed his forehead, and they took their leave all deeply moved.'

On the 15th George had to return to his classes at the New College, Edinburgh, and when saying farewell, the old man held his hand and said: 'I canna keep ye awa' langer, an' I dinna want to keep mysel'. May God bless and prosper you! Oh be faithful—be faithful! See that you meet me in glory. I'm no able to speak. Farewell.'

During the latter portion of his illness he often said to my mother, "Oh, can you no help me to die?" A few days before the end he suffered fearfully from a dreadful cough, which racked and shook his whole frame; and it became very painful to those waiting on him, as they could do nothing to give him relief. He had to be given ice to cool and moisten his parched tongue, and seeing their distress he tried to assume a cheerfulness which was touchingly unselfish. He would sometimes smile and whisper jokingly: "Gie me anither sna' ba'." This was said with the intention of diverting

the grief of the loved and loving watchers round his bed.

'On Wednesday afternoon, 19th January 1876, he sank into a quiet sleep, and about five o'clock he passed peacefully away to "the rest that remaineth."'

My brother's notes conclude—

'He died in the 73rd year of his age and the 39th of his (ordained) ministry. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."'

NOTE ON TEETOTUM, p. 97.

Since writing the above a kind correspondent has sent me the following most interesting information regarding the teetotum, indicating the great antiquity of the toy. He says it was really a Roman implement of gambling, and the letters meant as follows. A. Accipe unum, D. Donato alium, N. Nihil, T. Totum.

THE END

Printed by R. & R. CLARK, *Edinburgh.*

BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

SPORT AND WORK ON THE NEPAUL FRONTIER

OR

Twelve Years' Sporting Reminiscences of an Indigo Planter.

By 'MAORI,'

AUTHOR OF 'TIRHOOT RHYMES,' ETC.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LONDON, 1878.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"A graphic and unvarnished account of experiences gained during twelve years of a planter's life in North Behar. Animated and even picturesque."—*Saturday Review.*

"Englishmen will read his book both with pleasure and profit. Has the art of communicating information in a very agreeable way—exceedingly lively and versatile in the mixed contents of his chapters. Curious, interesting and most valuable. Has gone on the plan of being comprehensive and exhaustive, and has the happy knack of putting subjects in fresh and agreeable lights. Describes his sport in animated detail, graphically told. The best and most instructive chapters on the habits and pursuit of the tiger that we have ever read. The volume is well worth reading all through."—*Pall Mall Gazette and Budget.*

"He wields the pen with equal address and success. His description of the delights of tiger-shooting in the Koosee jungles and sal forests, of hunting trips across the Nepaul frontier, or of a grand burst after a "fighting boar," are capitally written—fresh, vigorous, and full of the true sportsman's fire. Many of them will hardly be read without a sympathetic thrill of excitement. Such a book deserves to be popular. It is gossipy without being tedious, and informatory without being dull."—*Scotsman.*

"A most enjoyable record. . . . *Sport and Work* gives evidence of being written by a keen sportsman. It abounds with information of every imaginable kind; and at the present time, when matters are so unsettled in the East, and public attention is so much directed to that quarter, there is no doubt it will be warmly welcomed."—*Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News.*

"We have plenty of books describing the ways and manners of the army and of the civil service in India, but we know very little about the life of the pushing and thriving gentleman from Europe, who occupies India on his own account and brings his British businesslike activity to bear upon the astonished indolence of the native whose lands he cultivates and whose labour he employs. Here we see a specimen of the energetic ruling race carrying into industry and commerce the qualities by which empires are won and sustained, etc. The features of native life are most vividly presented in these lively pages."—*London Daily News.*

"Will certainly interest all who take it into their hands. An expert with both rifle and pen, his book will well repay perusal by those who have a taste for capitally written stories about sport. We hope 'Maori' will soon take pen in hand again to give the world a further instalment of his manifold experiences as a sportsman."—*Globe.*

"'Maori's' former literary efforts have proved him incapable of being dry, and that lucky incapacity is here more strikingly emphasised than ever. He is the keenest of observers, and wields a pen of rare vividness and force. Excellent and manly throughout. Much real information scattered throughout the book in the pleasantest form and the most unpretentious way. Possesses great descriptive power."—*Dundee Advertiser.*

"Exactly what is wanted. The author has succeeded in rendering his book one of more than ordinary interest. Written in a frank and cheery spirit. His sketches are spirited and interesting. His information about all Indian subjects is never without interest. Related with great freedom and full of interest."—*Glasgow Herald.*

"One of those frank, fresh, breezy books, which by their vividness of presentation and graphic narration have almost the charm of actual experience. Given with an ease and simplicity, and yet a fulness and accuracy of information which render this unpretentious volume more valuable than many professedly instructive works. The reader forgets that he is having his experience at second hand. The book is so interesting and picturesque that the scenes to which it relates, themselves appear before him, and he follows with breathless excitement the incidents of dangerous hardihood told with a flow of sporting enthusiasm with which it abounds. A quiet analysis of native life, much wise comment, irresistible *verve* and freedom of real sport in many of its anecdotes. Its merits are so various as to render its popularity assured, and to reflect the greatest credit upon the intelligence and acumen of the author."—*Melbourne Age.*

"It is only justice to say that his object of giving a full and clear idea of the life of an Anglo-Indian planter is most successfully attained. The author always writes in good spirits, his pages are animated with the moving reflex of his active life, and the life which he so enjoyed he has brought clearly and strongly before his readers."—*Australasian.*

"Agreeable without pretension, and fluent without verbosity—gives us the impression of having been written by one of those manly Englishmen whose courageous energy, intelligence, and administrative capacity qualify them alike to become the pioneers of colonisation and to obtain and exercise a commanding and beneficial influence over subject races. A careful and accurate observer," etc.—*Melbourne Argus.*

"It is seldom we meet with a book in which abundance of striking incident and picturesque reminiscences are dwelt upon with such vigorous facility of diction—comes to one with the interest of a long letter from an old acquaintance in which there is not one uninteresting sentence. Narrative after narrative, and incident after incident, each instinct with warm picturesque colouring, and breathing of a writer who tells of what he has seen or knows to be true. Might with advantage be added to the library of every one interested in Indian life and sport."—*Sydney Morning Herald.*

"Capital descriptive picture. Varied, readable, interesting, handsomely got up and well illustrated. Would make a capital gift book."—*Sydney Mail.*

The volume so favourably reviewed by the Press of England, India, and Australia has already been reprinted in America by Harper Brothers, New York.

OUR AUSTRALIAN COUSINS.

By 'MAORI' (The Honourable James Inglis)

AUTHOR OF 'TIRHOOT RHYMES,' 'SPORT AND WORK ON THE NEPAUL FRONTIER,' ETC.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"Of the book as a whole it gives us pleasure to speak in terms of warm appreciation. The author is demonstrably a diligent and keen observer. . . . It may be read as quickly as a novel; and, indeed, it is more interesting than are many novels. This brings us to what we deem to be Mr. Inglis's special gifts, namely, remarkably vivid and racy descriptive and narrative powers. He has a capital vocabulary, and a bright, frank, cheery, racy, graphic style which evidently carried him along easily and pleasantly in the writing, and has equally carried us along in the reading."—*Sydney Mail.*

"Altogether this is one of the best books of Australian travel that have appeared in recent times."—*London Daily News.*

"*Our Australian Cousins* is a pleasant and an entertaining book, and we shall be glad to find that it has a wide circulation."—*Sydney Morning Herald.*

"The book will be found highly interesting, valuable, and entertaining. Even the faults do not seem out of place in an account of a young, vigorous, and expanding nation, proudly conscious of its abounding energy and vitality, and not indisposed to 'bounce' regarding its wonderful progress and industrial achievements."—*The Scotsman.*

"Mr. Inglis possesses one singular merit, not often to be found in writers upon Australia; he has the courage to expose abuses and to denounce their authors, as well as to praise the climate and to extol the riches and capabilities of the country. . . . He indulges in warmer hopes of its future than most authors, and describes its scenery and rural sports in the bright, fresh style which characterised his former volume, *Sport and Work on the Nepaul Frontier*."—*The Athenæum.*

"It is the characteristic and recommendation of the work that it fulfils the promise of the preface. It is naturally and frankly written, with a good deal of the ease and unreserve of private correspondence, and its author is exceedingly outspoken with respect to the flaws in the political and social life and institutions of these communities. . . . It is written in a lively and entertaining style, and it contains a fund of information respecting these colonies, besides offering some valuable suggestions for the introduction of novel industries."—*The Argus, Melbourne.*

"Besides describing the legal, commercial, and legislative aspects of Australia, Mr. Inglis depicts with a skilful hand some curious adventures he met with in the social world. . . . In his broad survey of the colony he has not omitted to describe Australian forest and coast scenery, together with many of the interesting denizens of plain and river. His sketches of his shooting expeditions are vivid, picturesque, and useful from a strictly scientific point of view."—*The London Standard.*

"Mr. Inglis has written a very pleasant and a very valuable book, not for colonists only, but for those at home who wish to know what our colonies are like. . . . The portions of his book that will most please the general reader are those devoted to descriptions of the scenery,

animal life, and sports of the colonies. We have seldom read fresher, healthier descriptions. . . . The scraps of natural history, too, are all exceedingly interesting, as well as some of the tales about animal sagacity. . . . The book is full of matter that will delight the sportsman and naturalist, and about which there can be no doubt of any kind." —*The Spectator.*

OUR NEW ZEALAND COUSINS.

By 'MAORI' (The Honourable James Inglis)

AUTHOR OF 'TIRHOOT RHYMES,' 'SPORT AND WORK ON THE NEPAUL FRONTIER,' 'OUR AUSTRALIAN COUSINS,' ETC.

SAMPSON LOW AND CO., LONDON, 1887.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"This volume comprises a series of letters contributed by the author, who is the Minister of Public Instruction of New South Wales, to a Sydney paper. The writer's observations of the condition of the colony and its inhabitants are fresh and suggestive."—*London Daily News.*

"The Minister of Instruction of New South Wales, as his previous books on Nepaul and Australia bear witness, is a past master in the art of writing genial, lively, gossipy notices of men and manners in the countries where he has sojourned. *Our New Zealand Cousins* is certain, therefore, of a hearty reception in the Antipodes and at home."—*The Scotsman.*

"*Our New Zealand Cousins* is an interesting account of the New Zealand group of islands by a man who has visited them thoroughly at various times during the last twenty years."—*Saturday Review.*

"This work is one of the most interesting and should prove one of the most useful volumes that has been published respecting New Zealand. The writer has evidently travelled much, observed much, experienced much, thought much, written much. His style is easy and free, his descriptions of scenery are graphic and strikingly true. . . . The little work, in addition to being most entertaining reading, is one of great utility and instruction." -*Auckland Evening Star.*

"The publication of his book must be of benefit to these colonies." —*New Zealand Herald and Daily Southern Cross.*

"The author of this book is well known to Australian readers as a fluent speaker and racy writer, who adds to a keen perception of what nature has done for these colonies, an intelligent judgment of all that the colonists have done for themselves, and enterprising and liberal views as to a great deal more that should now be undertaken."—*Sydney Morning Herald.*

"Mr. Inglis's criticisms upon the various phases of colonisation in New Zealand are characterised by considerable keenness of observation and by a truly British sympathy with the energetic and intelligent development of a young country's resources."—*Sydney Daily Telegraph.*

BOOKS PUBLISHED BY

DAVID DOUGLAS

10 Castle Street,
Edinburgh, *February* 1894.

A FOREGONE CONCLUSION.
By
W. D. HOWELLS
EDINBURGH
DAVID DOUGLAS · PUBLISHER
T. & A. CONSTABLE

AMERICAN AUTHORS.

Latest Editions. Revised by the Authors. In 1s. volumes. By Post, 1s. 2d.

Printed by Constable, and published with the sanction of the Authors.

By W. D. HOWELLS.

A Foregone Conclusion.
A Chance Acquaintance.
Their Wedding Journey.
A Counterfeit Presentment.
The Lady of the Aroostook. 2 vols.
Out of the Question.
The Undiscovered Country. 2 vols.
A Fearful Responsibility.
Venetian Life. 2 vols.
Italian Journeys. 2 vols.
The Rise of Silas Lapham. 2 vols.
Indian Summer. 2 vols.
The Shadow of a Dream.
An Imperative Duty.

By FRANK R. STOCKTON.

Rudder Grange.
The Lady or the Tiger?
A Borrowed Month.

By GEORGE W. CURTIS.

Prue and I.

By J. C. HARRIS (*Uncle Remus*).

Mingo, and other Sketches.

By GEO. W. CABLE.

Old Creole Days.
Madame Delphine.

By B. W. HOWARD.

One Summer.

By MARY E. WILKINS.

A Humble Romance.
A Far-away Melody.

By HELEN JACKSON.

Zeph. A Posthumous Story.

By MATT. CRIM.

In Beaver Cove.

By JOHN BURROUGHS.

Winter Sunshine.
Pepacton.
Locusts and Wild Honey.
Wake-Robin.
Birds and Poets.
Fresh Fields.

By OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table. 2 vols.
The Poet. 2 vols.
The Professor. 2 vols.
Poetical Works. 4 vols.

By C. P. LATHROP.

An Echo of Passion.

By R. C. WHITE.

Mr. Washington Adams.

By T. B. ALDRICH.

The Queen of Sheba.
Marjorie Daw.
Prudence Palfrey.
The Stillwater Tragedy. 2 vols.
Wyndham Towers: A Poem.
Two Bites at a Cherry.

By B. MATTHEWS and H. C. BUNNER.

In Partnership.

By WILLIAM WINTER.

Shakespeare's England.
Wanderers: A Collection of Poems.
Gray Days and Gold.

By JAMES L. ALLEN.

Flute and Violin.
Sister Dolorosa.

*** *Other Volumes of this attractive Series in preparation.*

Any of the above may be had bound in Cloth extra, at 2s. each volume.

'A set of charming little books.'—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

'A remarkably pretty series.'—*Saturday Review.*

'These neat and minute volumes are creditable alike to printer and publisher.'—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

'The most graceful and delicious little volumes with which we are acquainted.'—*Freeman.*

'Soundly and tastefully bound . . . a little model of typography . . . and the contents are worthy of the dress.'—*St. James's Gazette.*

'The delightful shilling series of "American Authors," introduced by Mr. David Douglas, has afforded pleasure to thousands of persons.'—*Figaro.*

'The type is delightfully legible, and the page is pleasant for the eye to rest upon; even in these days of cheap editions we have seen nothing that has pleased us so well.'—*Literary World.*

EDINBURGH: DAVID DOUGLAS.

SCOTTISH STORIES AND SKETCHES.

Johnny Gibb of Gushetneuk in the Parish of Pyketillim, with Glimpses of Parish Politics about A.D. 1843, by WILLIAM ALEXANDER, LL.D. Tenth Edition, with Glossary, Fcap. 8vo, 2s.

Seventh Edition, with Twenty Illustrations—Portraits and Landscapes—by Sir GEORGE REID, *P.*R.S.A. Demy 8vo, 12s. 6d.

'A most vigorous and truthful delineation of local character, drawn from a portion of the country where that character is peculiarly worthy of careful study and record.' —*The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.*

'It is a grand addition to our pure Scottish dialect; . . . it is not merely a capital specimen of genuine Scottish northern *dialect;* but it is a capital specimen of pawky characteristic Scottish humour. It is full of good hard Scottish dry fun.' —*Dean Ramsay.*

Life among my Ain Folk, by the Author of 'JOHNNY GIBB OF GUSHETNEUK.'

Contents.

1. Mary Malcolmson's Wee Maggie.
2. Couper Sandy.
3. Francie Herriegerie's Sharger Laddie.
4. Baubie Huie's Bastard Geet.
5. Glengillodram.

Fcap. 8vo. Second Edition. Cloth, 2s. 6d. Paper, 2s.

'Mr. Alexander thoroughly understands the position of men and women who are too often treated with neglect, and graphically depicts their virtues and vices, and shows to his readers difficulties, struggles, and needs which they are sure to be the wiser for taking into view.'—*Freeman.*

Notes and Sketches of Northern Rural Life in the Eighteenth Century, by the Author of 'JOHNNY GIBB OF GUSHETNEUK.' In 1 vol. Fcap. 8vo, 2s. 6d., 2s., and 1s.

'This delightful little volume. It is a treasure. . . . We admire the telling simplicity of the style, the sly, pawky, Aberdonian humour, the wide acquaintance with the social and other conditions of the northern rural counties of last century, and the fund of illustrative anecdotes which enrich the volume. The author has done great service to the cause of history and of progress. It is worth a great many folios of the old dry-as-dust type.'—*Daily Review.*

Chronicles of Glenbuckie, by HENRY JOHNSTON, Author of 'The Dawsons of Glenara.' Extra Fcap. 8vo, 5s.

*** A book of humour and pathos, descriptive of the social, political, and ecclesiastical life in a Scottish parish fifty years ago.

'A genuine bit of Scottish literature.'—*Scottish Leader.*

Scotch Folk. Illustrated. Fourth Edition enlarged. Fcap. 8vo, price 1s.

'They are stories of the best type, quite equal in the main to the average of Dean Ramsay's well-known collection.'—*Aberdeen Free Press.*

Rosetty Ends, or the Chronicles of a Country Cobbler. By Job Bradawl (A. DEWAR WILLOCK), Author of 'She Noddit to me.' Fcap. 8vo, Illustrated. 2s. and 1s.

'The sketches are amusing productions, narrating comical incidents, connected by a thread of common character running through them all—a thread waxed into occasional strength by the "roset" of a homely, entertaining wit.'—*Scotsman.*

EDINBURGH: DAVID DOUGLAS.

LITTLE BROWN BOOKS.

Foolscap 8vo, Sixpence each.

The Religion of Humanity: An Address delivered at the Church Congress, Manchester, October 1888, by the Right Hon. ARTHUR J. BALFOUR, M.P., LL.D., etc. 6d.

'We have called the pamphlet a sermon because it is one, though the fitting text, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," is courteously omitted; and we venture to say that of all who will read it, not one per cent. ever read or heard one more convincing or intellectually more delightful.'—*Spectator.*

[*A large type edition of this may also be had in cloth at 5s.*]

Fishin' Jimmy, by A. T. SLOSSON. 6d. '*A choice story from America.*'

'A story from which, in its simplicity and pathos, we may all learn lessons of wisdom and charity.'—*Freeman.*

'A pathetic but pretty little story, telling the simple life of one possessed of a profound veneration for all things heavenly, yet viewing them with the fearless questioning eyes of the child.'—*Literary World.*

'Macs' in Galloway. By PATRICK DUDGEON. 6d.

Ailsie and Gabr'el Veitch. 6d.

Rab and his Friends. By Dr. JOHN BROWN. 6d.

Marjorie Fleming. By Dr. JOHN BROWN. 6d.

Our Dogs. By Dr. JOHN BROWN. 6d.

'With Brains, Sir.' By Dr. JOHN BROWN. 6d.

Minchmoor. By Dr. JOHN BROWN. 6d.

Jeems the Door-Keeper. By Dr. JOHN BROWN. 6d.

The Enterkin. By Dr. JOHN BROWN. 6d.

Plain Words on Health. By Dr. JOHN BROWN. 6d.

Something about a Well: with more of Our Dogs. By Dr. JOHN BROWN. 6d.

WORKS BY DR. JOHN BROWN.

Horæ Subsecivæ. 3 Vols. 22s. 6d.

Vol. I. Locke and Sydenham. Sixth Edition, with Portrait by James Faed. Crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

Vol. II. Rab and his Friends. Fourteenth Edition. Crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

Vol. III. John Leech. Sixth Edition, with Portrait by George Reid, R.S.A. Crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

Rab and his Friends. With India-proof Portrait of the Author after Faed, and seven Illustrations after Sir G. Harvey, Sir Noel Paton, Mrs. Blackburn, and G. Reid, R.S.A. Demy 4to, cloth, 9s.

Marjorie Fleming: A Sketch. Being a Paper entitled 'Pet Marjorie; A Story of a Child's Life fifty years ago.' New Edition, with Illustrations by Warwick Brookes. Demy 4to, 7s. 6d. and 6s.

Rab and his Friends. Cheap Illustrated Edition. Square 12mo, ornamental wrapper, 1s.

EDINBURGH: DAVID DOUGLAS.

SCRIPTURE HISTORY, ETC.

Rev. John Ker, D.D.

SERMONS: FIRST SERIES. 14th Edition. Crown 8vo, . . . 6s. od.
SERMONS: SECOND SERIES. Fifth Thousand. Crown 8vo, . . 6s. od.
THOUGHTS FOR HEART AND LIFE. Second Edition. Ex. Fcap. 8vo, . 4s. 6d.
LETTERS: 1866-1885. Second Edition. Crown 8vo, ... 4s. 6d.

Rev. George Bowen, of Bombay.

DAILY MEDITATIONS. New Edition. Sm. 4to, ... 5s. od.
LOVE REVEALED. New Edition. Sm. 4to, ... 5s. od.

Thomas Erskine, of Linlathen.

THE LETTERS OF. Edited by Dr. HANNA. New Edition. Cr. 8vo, . 7s. 6d.
THE BRAZEN SERPENT, OR LIFE COMING THROUGH DEATH. Cr. 8vo, 5s. od.
THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF REVEALED RELIGION. Cr. 8vo, . . 5s. od.
THE SPIRITUAL ORDER. Cr. 8vo, ... 5s. od.
THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION. Cr. 8vo, ... 6s. od.
THE UNCONDITIONAL FREENESS OF THE GOSPEL. Cr. 8vo, . . 3s. 6d.
THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD. Ex. Fcap. 8vo, ... 1s. od.

William Hanna, D.D., LL.D.

THE EARLIER YEARS OF OUR LORD. Ex. Fcap. 8vo, . . 5s. od.
THE MINISTRY IN GALILEE. Ex. Fcap. 8vo, ... 5s. od.
THE CLOSE OF THE MINISTRY. Ex. Fcap. 8vo, ... 5s. od.
THE PASSION WEEK. Ex. Fcap. 8vo, ... 5s. od.
THE LAST DAY OF OUR LORD'S PASSION. Ex. Fcap. 8vo, . . 5s. od.
THE FORTY DAYS AFTER THE RESURRECTION. Ex. Fcap. 8vo, . 5s. od.
THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. Ex. Fcap. 8vo, ... 5s. od.
MEMOIRS OF THE REV. THOS. CHALMERS. 2 vols. Cr. 8vo, . . 12s. od.

Rev. Walter C. Smith, D.D.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. Cr. 8vo, ... 6s. od.

Professor Blackie.

ON SELF-CULTURE. Fcap. 8vo, ... 2s. 6d.

Principal Shairp.

STUDIES IN POETRY AND PHILOSOPHY. Cr. 8vo, ... 7s. 6d.
SKETCHES IN HISTORY AND POETRY. Cr. 8vo, ... 7s. 6d.
CULTURE AND RELIGION. Fcap. 8vo, ... 3s. 6d.

Professor Hodgson.

ERRORS IN THE USE OF ENGLISH. Cr. 8vo, ... 3s. 6d.

Mrs. M. M. Gordon.

WORK; OR, PLENTY TO DO AND HOW TO DO IT. Fcap. 8vo, . . 2s. 6d.

Rev. Archibald Scott, D.D.

BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY. Demy 8vo, ... 7s. 6d.
SACRIFICE: ITS PROPHECY AND FULFILMENT. Cr. 8vo, . . . 7s. 6d.

The Duke of Argyll.

WHAT IS TRUTH? Fcap. 8vo, ... 1s. od.

EDINBURGH: DAVID DOUGLAS.

SCOTTISH HISTORY AND ARCHÆOLOGY.

The Hereditary Sheriffs of Galloway. By Sir Andrew Agnew, Bart. Second Edition. 2 vols. Demy 8vo, 25s.

Celtic Scotland: A History of Ancient Alban. By William F. Skene, D.C.L., Historiographer-Royal for Scotland. In 3 vols. I. History and Ethnology. II. Church and Culture. III. Land and People. Demy 8vo, 45s. Illustrated with Maps.

Scotland under her Early Kings. A History of the Kingdom to the close of the 13th century. By E. W. Robertson. In 2 vols. 8vo, cloth, 36s.

The History of Liddesdale, Eskdale, Ewesdale, Wauchope-dale, and the Debateable Land. Part I., from the Twelfth Century to 1530. By Robert Bruce Armstrong. The edition is limited to 275 copies demy quarto, and 105 copies on large paper (10 inches by 13), 42s. and 84s. net.

The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland, from the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century. By David M'Gibbon and Thomas Ross, Architects. 5 vols., with about 2000 Illustrations of Ground Plans, Sections, Views, Elevations, and Details. Royal 8vo. 42s. each vol. net.

Scotland in Early Christian Times. By Joseph Anderson, LL.D., Keeper of the National Museum of the Antiquaries of Scotland. (Being the Rhind Lectures in Archæology for 1879 and 1880.) 2 vols. Demy 8vo, profusely Illustrated. 12s. each volume.

Scotland in Pagan Times. By Joseph Anderson, LL.D. (Being the Rhind Lectures in Archæology for 1881 and 1882.) In 2 vols. Demy 8vo, profusely Illustrated. 12s. each volume.

The Past in the Present. What is Civilisation? (Being the Rhind Lectures in Archæology, delivered in 1876 and 1878.) By Sir Arthur Mitchell, K.C.B., M.D., LL.D. Demy 8vo, with 148 Woodcuts, 15s.

Scotland as it was and as it is: A History of Races, Military Events, and the rise of Commerce. By the Duke of Argyll. Demy 8vo, illustrated, 7s. 6d.

Studies in the Topography of Galloway. By Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart., M.P. Demy 8vo, 14s.

Ogham Inscriptions in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland. By the late Sir Samuel Ferguson. Demy 8vo, 12s.

Ecclesiological Notes on some of the Islands of Scot-land, with other Papers relating to Ecclesiological Remains on the Scottish Mainland and Islands. By Thomas S. Muir, Author of 'Characteristics of Old Church Architecture,' etc. Demy 8vo, with numerous Illustrations, 21s.

Early Travellers in Scotland, 1295-1689. Edited by P. Hume Brown. Demy 8vo, 14s.

Tours in Scotland, 1677 and 1681. By Thomas Kirk and Ralph Thoresby. Edited by P. Hume Brown. Demy 8vo, 5s.

Scotland before 1700. From Contemporary Documents. Edited by P. Hume Brown. Demy 8vo, 14s.

A Short Introduction to the Origin of Surnames. By Patrick Dudgeon, Cargen. Small 4to, 3s. 6d.

Circuit Journeys. By the late Lord Cockburn, one of the Judges of the Court of Session. Second Edition. Crown 8vo, 6s.

Recollections of a Tour made in Scotland, A.D. 1803. By Dorothy Wordsworth. Edited by J. C. Shairp. Third Edition. Crown 8vo, 6s.

EDINBURGH: DAVID DOUGLAS.

OPEN-AIR BOOKS.

The Art of Golf. By Sir W. G. SIMPSON, Bart. In 1 vol. demy 8vo, with twenty plates from instantaneous photographs of Professional Players, chiefly by A. F. Macfie, Esq. Price 15s.

'He has devoted himself for years with exemplary zeal to the collecting of everything which a true golfer would like to know about the royal game, and the result of his labour is worthy of the highest commendation. . . . The prominent feature of the volume is the set of illustrations. For the first time, by means of instantaneous photography, are produced on paper the movements made by players with a classical style in the process of striking a golf ball.'—*Scotsman.*

Modern Horsemanship. Three Schools of Riding. An Original Method of Teaching the Art by means of Pictures from the Life. By EDWARD L. ANDERSON. New Edition, re-written and re-arranged, with 40 Moment-Photographs. Demy 8vo, 21s.

The History of Curling. By JOHN KERR, M.A. This volume has been prepared under the authority of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club, and has been compiled from official sources. Illustrated. Demy 8vo, 10s. 6d. Royal 8vo, 31s. 6d. net.

'The book is one of high value. It represents much work of learning and inquiry into an obscure subject, and it illustrates the character of the Scot and the social history of Scotland in a manner that is not the less instructive for being pleasing as well as scholarly.'—*Scotsman.*

How to Catch Trout. By THREE ANGLERS. Illustrated, 1s. & 2s.

'The aim of this book is to give, within the smallest space possible, such practical information and advice as will enable the beginner, without further instruction, to attain moderate proficiency in the use of every legitimate lure.'

'A delightful little book, and one of great value to Anglers.'—*Scotsman.*

'The advice given is always sound.'—*Field.*

'The most practical and instructive work of its kind in the literature of angling.'—*Dundee Advertiser.*

'A well-written and thoroughly practical little book.'—*Land and Water.*

A Year in the Fields. By JOHN WATSON. Fcap. 8vo, 1s.

'A charming little work. A lover of life in the open air will read the book with unqualified pleasure.'—*Scotsman.*

On Horse-Breaking. By ROBERT MORETON. Second Edition, 1s.

Horses in Accident and Disease. By J. ROALFE COX. Demy 8vo, Illustrated. 5s.

The Gamekeeper's Manual; being an Epitome of the Game Laws of England and Scotland, and of the Gun Licenses and Wild Birds Acts. By ALEXANDER PORTER, Chief-Constable of Roxburghshire. Second Edition, crown 8vo, 3s. net.

'A concise and valuable epitome to the Game Laws, specially addressed to those engaged in protecting game.'—*Scotsman.*

The Protection of Woodlands against Dangers arising from Organic and Inorganic Causes, as re-arranged for the Fourth Edition of Kauschinger's 'Waldchutz.' By HERMANN FURST, D.Œc., Director of the Bavarian Forest Institute at Aschaffenburg. Translated by JOHN NISBET, D.Œc., of the Indian Forest Service, Author of 'British Forest Trees and their Sylvicultural Characteristics and Treatment.' Demy 8vo, Illustrated, 9s.

Timbers, and How to Know Them. By Dr. ROBERT HARTIG. Translated from the German by WILLIAM SOMERVILLE, D.Œc., B.Sc., etc. Illustrated, 2s.

Iona. By ELIZABETH A. M'HARDY, with Illustrations by the Author. Ex-fcap. 8vo, 1s.

Iona. With Illustrations. By the DUKE OF ARGYLL. Fcap. 8vo, 1s.